

"THE MAGNIFICENT SEVEN"

Screenplay

By

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FINAL SHOOTING SCRIPT
February 3, 1960

(Transcript of Script
Supervisor's script as
shot on location)

FADE IN:

1 VILLAGERS - DAY

Motionless now at the stream, the women, heads turned to look back over their shoulders, stare up at the birds.

2 MOUNTED MEN - DAY

By twos and threes, in casual column formation, some thirty MOUNTED MEN jog slowly and arrogantly out of the forest past a burial ground and through the fields toward the village.

Indios, mestizos, a scattering of North Americans, they are a grimy, sweaty lot, ragged and unkempt, with cartridge-belts Xed across their chests, rifles slanted across their backs and machetes flopping at their waists.

The men's faces are steely, bleak and sullen. Their leader's face is something else again.

His name is CALVERA and he wears a broad smile. Cheerful, almost innocent, it is the smile of a man who is an irresistible force and knows it and knows you know it, too. His size and bulk testify to his strength. That he has survived to the age of forty is evidence of his shrewdness, ruthlessness and cunning. The weapon he carries and the men he leads bear witness to his power. His self-assurance, therefore, is overwhelming and from it derives a certain bravura in manner and dress: expansive gestures, slightly exaggerated facial expressions, broadly striped pants, enormous rowels to his spurs.

SANTOS, his second-in-command, plucks an ear of corn from a stalk as he goes past and, spurring to Calvera's side, hands it to him. Calvera examines it with interest as he rides, pinching it, stripping it and nibbling experimentally at a kernel.

CALVERA
Beautiful, beautiful corn!

They approach the hut where the villagers strip the corn. In the hut are ENRIQUE and HILARIO.

ENRIQUE
(to Hilario as he
spots Calvera)
Hilario.

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

Hilario turns to look. Calvera leads the men towards the corn hut. He waves to Hilario as he passes.

CALVERA

(waving corn)

Buenos dias, Hilario. Wonderful -
best crop we ever had, wonderful!

They continue on towards the village. Hilario rises, hate and anger in his face.

PLAZA - DAY

Ixcatlan is a poor village. Most of the houses are of adobe, one-room affairs with earthen floors, doorways their only apertures; the rest are jacales, flimsy structures of cornstalks and bamboo. There is a small church heavily ornamented with frieze-work, the motifs deriving from the Aztec, and, in the middle of the plaza, a fountain made of rocks. The single street, leading into the plaza at one side and from it out into the valley at the other, is like the dry bed of a stream.

WOMEN have been preparing food in the doorways, grinding corn or slapping thin the tortillas, CHILDREN at their sides or in their laps. SOME MEN have been squatting against the sunny walls or lounging at the fountain, mending gear and gossiping.

CALVERA and the men ride into the main street.

SOTERO, the town's merchant, motions his wife and child into his store.

JULIO

(to Sotero as he
spots OS bandits)

Pappa!

TOMAS and a small boy RICO, have been filling water jugs at the fountain. They stop and stare.

No one runs to hide; it would be useless. Immobilized, expressionless as so many statues, the women in dark skirts blouses and rebozos, the men in straw sombreros and white cotton pants and shirts, they watch the mounted men stream in.

Calvera's men stop by the fountain, some by Sotero's. Calvera, Cirillo and his second henchman, SANTOS continue on down the street to the end of the village. They stop at a house where some young girls are weaving cloth.

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(CONTINUED)

CALVERA

Buenos dias! Work, work,
 (he looks around)
 everything is ripened well -
 (eyes for a moment
 on girl)

Everything!

He and his two men, turn their horses and start back towards Sotero's. They pass MIGUEL, a boy JAIME, and CONCEPCION, who are coiling rope on street.

CALVERA

(as he goes by)

Buenos dias, Concepcion --Jaime -
 Miguel -----
 (pointing to his
 belly)

Six months ago - now - ha ha!

L SOTERO'S - DAY

They ride up to Sotero's. They dismount. Calvera crosses over to Sotero.

CALVERA

Sotero, my good friend, how are you.

He crosses over to a corner to wash basin, and throws water on his face.

CALVERA

(finish washing)

You have drink.

They cross into the main room of store. Sotero, pours a drink as Calvera crosses over to some skin furs he has spotted.

CALVERA

I can't tell you what pleasure it
 gives me to see a village like
 this.

(he spots Sotero's
 wife and boy)

Buenos dias!

(gets furs - calls to
 Santos outside)

Santos!

(throws furs to him)

(CONTINUED)

(CONTINUED)

CALVERA (Cont'd.)

There's so much restlessness and --

(almost spitting
the word)

- change in the outside world. People
no longer content with their station
in life. Women's fashions more and more
shameless.

(back into porch)

Religions - you'd weep if you saw how
the true religious feeling is now a
thing of the past.

(sits at table; to Santos -
taking the drink)

Cigar.

(to Sotero)

Last month we were in San Juan. Sit
down.

(Sotero sits)

A rich town. Much blessed by God.
A big church. Not a little one like
here where the priest comes only twice
a year but a big one. You'd think they'd
have gold candlesticks in that church and
a poor-box filled to overflowing. You
know what we found?

(tosses down the drink)

Brass candlesticks and almost nothing
in the poor-box.

CIRILO

We took it anyway.

Calvera shrivels him with a look.

CALVERA

I know we took it anyway. I'm only
trying to show him how little religion
some people now have. As for manners -

(offhandedly he motions to
Santos to take cigars
from table)

- I won't even tell you what's happened
to manners. You can imagine. Business
practices.

(he pokes Sotero)

Besides yourself, can you name one
honest merchant? Hyenas. If I told
you what they charge for guns, ammunition...

(helpless gesture)

Where am I to find the money?

(to his men)

Take food only - food and water only!

Cont'd.

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CALVERA Cont'd.)

(holds up his hand)

Nah. Nah, the days of good hunting are a thing of the past. Once there were cattle, horses, gold - fruit from the tree. No more. Everywhere I go, a price on my head, the Rurales at my heels. When I return from this hunting expedition, who can say how many of my men will be alive?

(to men)

Eugough! We'll get the rest when we come back!

(a sigh, a smile)

I love the village. Life goes round and round like a wheel cart. I envy you. I know you have your problems. Bad weather. Locusts. But what if you had to carry my load? The need to provide food, like a good father, for the mouths of my hungry men?

A farmer named RAFAEL goes berserk. Screaming, he hurls himself at Calvera with a machete.

RAFAEL

Thief - murderer. Thief. Thief - thief!

Calvera calmly watches him.

POW! The gun has appeared in Calvera's hand as though by magic. Rafael stumbles, recovers and goes on. POW! This time he goes down, almost at the feet of Calvera's horse. His fingers claw the earth and then he lies still. Quiet. LUPE, Rafael's wife, runs across street to Rafael, sinks to her knees in anguish.

LUPE

Rafael, Rafael - Rafael!

Calvera is distressed: what kind of behavior is this? No one moves as his eyes circle the plaza and come to rest upon the corpse, his expression changing to one of reproof and mild disgust for irrationality. Studying it, he flicks a match aflame, lights the cigar, then takes it from his mouth and drops the match.

CALVERA

Stupid. Stupid. Stupid!
(but after a moment,
his face brightens)
Sotero, bury him well!
Cont'd.

CONTINUED:

CALVERA (Cont'd.)

(to Sotero)

We must have another discussion very soon. It's always a pleasure to hear the views of my good friend Sotero. - Maybe when I come back, eh? - Adios.

Lightly, he spurs his mount.

CALVERA

Vamonos!

He jogs across the plaza and out into the valley, his men behind him.

5 PLAZA - DAY

Calvera and his men have gone. By ones and twos, the villagers gather in a circular mass around Rafael and his wife, a woman holding her for comfort.

WOMAN

(to Rafael's widow)

Lupe, Lupe --

They all squat on their hams, heads down in despair.

In the center of this mass are the headmen and elders, Sotero, a little wisp of a man named MIGUEL, a grayhead named CONCEPCION, DEMETRIO, and the lanky ASUNCION. They speak with deliberation and there is a little gap of silence after each man voices his thoughts while the next man weighs his words. All of them more or less address themselves to Sotero who says nothing but listens carefully.

MIGUEL

If he steals our harvest again we might as well cut our throats and be done with it.

CONCEPCION

Leave the valley. That's what we must do.

LUIS

Live somewhere else!

TOMAS

Take our homes with us! Our farms.

(CONTINUED)

5

CONTINUED:

EUSEBIO

We could hide some food.

MIGUEL

From Calvera?

He makes the familiar burnt hand gesture, accompanied by a whistle of pain.

DEMETRIO

He never steals all our food. He lets us have enough to go on with.

EUSEBIO

That's something.

CONCEPCION

We could beg him to leave us a little more.

SOTERO

No, no -- that would make him more angry. I don't think we should do anything.

HILARIO

We must do something.

HILARIO, in his middle thirties, is a serious man, a thinker. His young wife, TRINITA, pregnant with their first child, tugs at his sleeve to caution prudence. He ignores this.

SOTERO

(points to Rafael's body)

Like Rafael! Talk sense.

HILARIO

We break our backs in the fields and our bellies stay empty. We must do something.

SOTERO

Do what!?

Hilario tries to think, wringing his hands in frustration.

MIGUEL

Something.

TOMAS

We must do something.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

SOTERO

But what?

TOMAS

I don't know.

HILARIO

We'll ask the Old Man. He'll know.

DISSOLVE TO:

6.

EXT. TRAIL AND OLD MAN'S HOUSE - DAY

Hilario, Miguel and Tomas ride up trail leading to the Old Man's house. The house is on the very lip of a plateau overlooking the village. Of adobe, only one room like the houses below, it is several cuts above their primitive rudeness and is graced by a tile-roof porch furnished with small luxuries: clusters of brightly colored gourds on the walls, a bear-hide rug.

The three villagers ride into the yard. They dismount and cross up on the porch. Hilario knocks on the door. The door opens and they enter inside.

DISSOLVE:

7.

The Old Man and the three villagers are seated on the porch of the house. The OLD MAN, although past eighty, is still vigorous, alert and bright of eye. Once the mayordomo of a vast estate, he speaks with impatient, waspish authority.

OLD MAN

Fight. You must fight. Fight!

HILARIO

With machetes and bare hands against guns?

OLD MAN

Buy guns.

MIGUEL

Buy?

OLD MAN

Go to the border. Guns are plentiful there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMAS

But what are we to use for money?

The Old Man draws on a strand of leather around his neck. From under his shirt he brings forth a soft leather pouch. Inside the pouch is a fine gold watch. He looks at it for the last time, hands it to Hilario.

OLD MAN

Sell that. And anything else
you can collect.

Hilario and the others are impressed by the extent of the Old Man's sacrifice. Yet there is still hesitancy.

HILARIO

Even if we had the guns --
we know how to plant and grow --
we don't know how to kill.

OLD MAN

Then learn -- or die!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. COUNTRY

The 3 village committee-men on their way to the border town.

DISSOLVE TO:

CAMARGA - DAY

Camarga is a border town. Although it lies on the north bank of the Rio Grande, the proximity of Mexico is in evidence. Most of the buildings - few of them more than a single story high - are of board and shingle. But here and there the primary adobe structures can be seen. Also, among the Anglo signs - Camarga Bank, Camarga Hotel - are a few that say Posada, Abarrotes, Carniceria.

On the main street are ANGLOS and MEXICANS, burros and horses, buckboards and drays.

Down the main street, on their small, bony Mexican horses, come Hilario, Miguel and Tomas. Total strangers to this strange land, they have no idea where or how to proceed in their quest.

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Anxiously, timidly, they swivel their heads from side to side. Everywhere are men with guns. If we could read their minds, the three villagers are thinking, "Does wearing a gun make a man a gunman? If so, how does one make a choice? What questions does one ask? Are they a dangerous breed, easily offended?"

They nudge one another and point, shoot covert glances, growing more uncertain and apprehensive by the moment. They continue on, coming to.....

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CROSS STREET

They turn the corner - their eyes widen (not with pleasure) at sight of a gleaming black hearse, to which a team of horses has already been hitched. Inside is a plain wooden coffin. The hearse stands in front of the CHAMLEE FUNERAL PARLOR. Across the street is the livery stable, its high double doors opening into a corral.

In front of the livery stable, is a STAGECOACH, ready to leave, the DRIVER and GUARD perched on top.

The three villagers ride past the hearse, they stop at a hitching post and dismount. Two SALESMEN approach the stagecoach from the hotel. Portly, middle-aged, nattily attired, their names are HENRY and ROBERT. Henry sees the hearse.

HENRY

(to Robert)

Well, sure looks like I got my money's worth, huh?

At which moment CHAMLEE, the undertaker, comes out of the funeral parlor. In evidence is a considerable gathering of HOSTLERS and IDLERS. The reason soon becomes apparent.

CHAMLEE

Hey! - I been waiting for you.

HENRY

You did a good job.

CHAMLEE

I'm sorry, friend, but there'll be no funeral.

HENRY

What?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Henry's response is a gesture of blank perplexity. The curious crowd closes in to watch what happens. Hilario, Miguel and Tomas have dismounted from their horses. From a safe distance they, too, watch the proceedings.

CHAMLEE

Oh, the grave is dug and the de-funct there is as ready as the embalmer's art can make him. But there'll be no funeral.

HENRY

What's the matter - didn't I pay you enough?

CHAMLEE

It's not a matter of money. For twenty dollars I'd plant anyone with a whoop and holler, But the funeral is off.

Chamlee takes a twenty dollar gold piece from his pocket, thrusts it into Henry's hand. Henry looks at it. He's irked.

HENRY

How do you like that! I want him buried. You want him buried. If he could sit up and talk, he'd second the motion. That's as unanimous as you can get.

CHAMLEE

Friend, you've behaved like a brother and a Christian. But you don't understand.

HENRY

Now look - I'm not looking for any praise. I'm a traveling salesman. Ladies corsets - I'm walking down the street. A man drops dead right in front of me. For two hours people kept stepping over and around him without lifting a finger. I'm just doing what any decent man would.

ROBERT

(sensing a situation)

Come on, Henry. Let's get on the stage.

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CONTINUED

10

HENRY

No - wait a minute. This guy's got to be buried. And soon. He's not turning into a nose-gay, you know.

CHAMLEE

I know - I would if I could. But there's an element in town that objects.

HENRY

Objects? To what?

CHAMLEE

They don't think he's fit to be buried there.

ROBERT

(this baffles him)

In Boot Hill?

HENRY

Why, there's nobody up there except murderers, horse-thieves and bankrupt old barflies. And if they ever felt exclusive, brother, they're past it now.

CHAMLEE

They happen to be white, friend, and old Sam there - well, old Sam was an Indian.

HENRY

I never thought you had to be anything but a corpse to get into Boot Hill. How long has this been going on?

CHAMLEE

That seems to be about a half hour ago --

(to the others)

It's not my doing, boys. You know I've always treated every man as just another future customer. And I'd be glad to bury him as I'd be to bury you or you.

HENRY

If that's the case, then get this hearse rolling.

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED:

CHAMLEE

I can't. My driver quit.

ROBERT

Is he prejudiced, too?

CHAMLEE

When there's a chance of having his head blown off, he's downright bigoted.

HENRY

Get another driver.

CHAMLEE

There isn't anybody else who'll drive it.

(he slaps the gold piece in Henry's hand again)

So here.

There is a pause as Henry makes an inarticulate sound of anger and frustration. A man standing in the second row of spectators speaks. This is CHRIS ADAMS.

CHRIS

Oh, hell, if that's all that's holding things up, I'll drive the rig.

Chris is a man in a dark suit of good cloth cut well but going threadbare, a white shirt with a bow-tie tucked under the collar, boots with the trousers outside and a gorgeous old bum of a black Kossuth hat with a floppy brim and a high, flat-topped, crumpled crown. In his late thirties, he has been around and, in the course, has developed a considerable manner best described as panache.

HENRY

You will?

He slaps the coin, which Chamlee has just succeeded in forcing upon him, back into Chamlee's hand.

Chris eases himself through the crowd toward the driver's seat, climbs to the top of the hearse.

VIN'S VOICE

If you hold on there - I'll ride along with you.

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CONTINUED:

VIN, about thirty and of enormously competent appearance, has been leaning on a rail of the corral, observing the proceedings. Now he walks over to the stage. Indicates the Guard's shotgun.

VIN

Can I borrow your scatter gun?

GUARD

You're more than welcome.

The guard hands him the shotgun and some shells. Vin crosses over to the stage, climbs up and loads the gun.

CHAMLEE

Hey, wait a minute.....wait a minute. This hearse cost me eight hundred and forty dollars in Denver. It's the only one in the county. I'll be darned if I'm going to give it up to a stranger to be shot at.

The Stagecoach Driver has been eyeing Chris with a pleased grin.

DRIVER

I'll pay for the damages. I want to see this.

GUARD

Me too.

The Driver hauls out a wad of money, gives it to the guard, then jumps off the stage.

The guard, with money in hand, crosses over to Chamlee.

Meanwhile, Vin has finished loading the shotgun and sits beside Chris.

VIN

Never rode shot-gun on a hearse before. All right, let 'er buck.

During above, Chris has taken out a LONG NINE -- something like our panatella -- and puts it between his white teeth. Chris flicks the reins and hearse rolls out of the side street into the main thoroughfare. The guard slaps the money into Chamlee's hand. Hilario, Miguel and Tomas are in the crowd that follows the hearse out, walking cautiously and at a safe distance.

THE STREET TO BOOT HILL - DAY

Turning into the main thoroughfare, Chris checks the horses. The street is empty. Not a man, not a dog, not a horse, not a vehicle. And not a sound but the slow CLOP-CLOP of the horses pulling the hearse.

Up front, Chris' eyes are everywhere, on the store-entrances, the upper windows, the alleys, the roofs. Vin, riding backwards on the seat, is equally on guard.

VIN

New in town?

CHRIS

Yeah.

VIN

Where you from?

CHRIS

Dodge. And you?

VIN

From Tombstone. Any action up there?

CHRIS

Uh-uh!

VIN

The same. People settled down.

CHRIS

Same all over.

A HARSH VOICE

(calling)

Injun-lovers.

Vin cocks his hammers, the click loud in the silent street.

CHRIS

Easy. Just wind. We'll get there.

VIN

Getting there's not bothering me -- it's staying there I mind.....

(after a pause)

On the left - behind us!

Chris looks to the left. There he sees a young man named CHICO. About twenty, he is a good-looking Mexican of

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CONTINUED:

medium height. He is moving under cover, dodging from doorway to doorway, parallel with the hearse. There is nothing furtive or threatening in his manner - as he immediately makes clear by tentatively raising his hands and shaking his head. He seems to be studying them as a novice might a master to see how it is done.

CHRIS

I don't think so.

A MOCKING VOICE

You ain't coming back.

CHRIS

Second story window. The curtain moved.

VIN

I'm not in a good position now -
let him stick his neck out a little.

POW! goes a rifle-shot. KER-BLAM! Vin's answer shatters a window.

VIN (cont'd)

(as he reloads)

Were you elected?

CHRIS

(studying his
amputated cigar)

No. But nominated real good.

A MOCKING VOICE

Just a sample, boys.

VIN

Soon?

CHRIS

Soon. The reception committee is forming.

The street disappears into open country immediately ahead. A little way out is a mound with makeshift crosses and grave-markers leaning this way and that. On top of the mound is the piled dirt of an open grave and in it a spade. Five men step up from the cemetery and range themselves in a road block.

BOOT HILL - DAY

The hearse rides up to the top of the hill. Five men, armed and vicious, are standing at the entrance gate to cemetery. The hearse continues towards them. The LEADER of the men, shotgun in hand, speaks.

LEADER

Hold it! Hold it right there!

The hearse comes to a stop right before them.

CHRIS

Anything wrong?

LEADER

Turn that rig around and get it down the hill!

The Leader and another man aim their guns. POW! POW! The Leader's arm is hit and the hand of the man next to him gets a bullet thru it. The members of the reception committee freeze, hands on their guns and guns still unlimbered. They stare at Chris, wide-eyed at his virtuosity. They drop their guns.

Chris, leaning back casually, gun in hand, studies them with professional objectivity. A second ticks by and then another while he estimates the fight left in them.

Meanwhile, Chico and the crowd have run up to the hill, have crouched behind an adobe wall and are peering at Chris.

Chris turns around in the seat, looks at the crowd.

CHRIS

I need six men up here!

Six members of the crowd cross over to the back of the hearse to carry the coffin to the grave.

The reception committee looks at the men open the doors of the hearse. They look back up at Chris, and give up. They move over to the side.

The six men slide the coffin out of the hearse, and start towards the open grave.

CHAMLEE

Hey boys, the drinks are on me.

With this, the crowd gets noisy and excited. The stagecoach driver yanks the money out of Chamlee's hands.

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CONTINUED:

Chico slaps his hat in envy and admiration.

Chris snaps the reins and, with Vin still beside him, U-turns the hearse and proceeds down the street toward the livery stable at a fast trot.

Chico reacts to hearse going downhill.

The three Villagers and crowd react to hearse going downhill. The Villagers look at one another and decide that Chris is the man for them to see.

13

LIVERY STABLE - DAY

Chris wheels the hearse around the corner, brakes it and ties the reins. He and Vin jump down and cross over to the corral.

Henry comes trotting around the corner, hat in hand, out of breath, goggle-eyed with admiration. He takes a bottle from his pocket.

HENRY

Hey, I'd like to buy you a drink.
And your friend.

CHRIS

Thanks.

Vin stoos by Chris. Robert enters from around the corner. Being more sedate, he didn't run like Henry. Chris takes the bottle.

HENRY

Where you from?

Chris, bottle to his mouth, gestures back over his shoulder. Hands the bottle to Vin.

ROBERT

Come on, Henry.
(cross over for
suitcases)

Chris points vaguely up ahead.

HENRY

I see. Uh huh.

The Stage Driver and Guard walk past toward the stage. The Driver holds up his fistful of money.

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CONTINUED:

DIVER

Hey, thanks for the free show.

Chris smiles and nods. Vin grins.

VIN

(gives gun back to guard)
You're more than welcome.

Henry, with suitcases, crosses over to the stage.

Vin returns the bottle to Chris - who gives it back to Henry, who takes a swig himself, enchanted to be drinking with two such men.

HENRY

Boy, that was really something I won't forget if I live to be a hundred!

ROBERT

(tugging his sleeve)
Henry, the stage is leaving.

HENRY

Wait'll Flora hears about it. She just won't.....

ROBERT

Henry, the stage. Come on.

Henry hates to part company. But must. As a final gesture...

HENRY

You keep this. Here.

He thrusts the bottle into Chris's hand, reluctantly trots off. There are two drinks left in the bottle. Chris hands the bottle to Vin. With a YELL from the Stage Driver, the stage takes off.

VIN

Where are you headed?

CHRIS

Drifting south, more or lsee. You?

VIN

Just drifting.

Vin finishes the bottle, tosses it aside.

CHRIS

Any action here?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

13

VIN

Grocery clerk. Bouncer in one of those bars across the street -- if that's your taste.

Chris's grunt, accompanied by a sidelong look is answer enough.

VIN

Yeah.

CHRIS

Well, see you.

Vin crosses over to his horse and mounts.

Chris takes his saddle bags off corral fence and starts off. He takes a few steps, stops and turns.

CHRIS

What's your name?

VIN

Make it Vin. What's yours?

CHRIS

Chris.

He flips a salute and walks on.

14

EXT. STREET - DAY

Chris starts across the street toward the Belmar Hotel, as Vin rides his horse out of the corral and rides away up the street.

As Chris reaches the front of Hotel, he notices Chico, who has been standing there noticing Chris. He seems to wish to speak to Chris or, at least, have Chris take notice of him.

Chris crosses up on hotel porch. Sizes it up. Looks a little expensive. He turns around and stares at Chico, who is still staring at him. Chico turns away and moves down the street.

Chris crosses to edge of porch, looks off, across the street. Sees a sign - ROOMS - and an arrow pointing.

Chris walks across the street towards the arrow, walks out of sight behind a building.

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CONTINUED:

Chico stops. Reacts to Chris walking away. Disgusted with himself for not doing whatever it is he wanted to do, Chico takes off his hat, watches Chris disappear.

CHRIS' ROOM - DAY

The door opens and Chris enters a small cubicle, unpainted and shabby, with a cot, a washstand and a smeary, cracked mirror on the wall.

Tired, he eases his saddle-bag to the floor, sits on the bed and removes his boots.

Getting up, he goes to the washstand to freshen up a bit and stares at his face. Then he shrugs and his hand goes to the pitcher. There is a KNOCK at the door.

Chris considers this briefly, lifts the saddle-bag to the cot, flips open the flap and poises his hand near the protruding gun-butt.

CHRIS

Yes?

The door swings open, revealing Hilario, Miguel and Tomas. They enter with dignity.

HILARIO

We think you are a man we can trust.

CHRIS

(a little startled)

Thank you very much, but....

TOMAS

We wish you to help us.

HILARIO

There is this man, Calvera....

MIGUEL

A thief and a murderer.....

TOMAS

He and his men, they steal our food and they leave us to starve. Not only that but our women...they --

CHRIS

Wait, wait, just a moment. If you need protection, why not go to the Rurales?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HILARIO

We did. Twice. But they can't station men in a small village for who knows how long. So they left.

TOMAS

And when they left, he came again, Calvera. And every year since. And he will do so until he's stopped.

CHRIS

Sit down.

MIGUEL

We need help.

HILARIO

We must buy guns. But we know nothing about them. Will you buy guns for us?

CHRIS

Guns are very expensive, and hard to get. Why don't you hire men?

HILARIO

Men?

CHRIS

Now-a-days gunmen are cheaper than guns.

TOMAS

Will you come?

HILARIO

It would be a blessing if you helped us.

CHRIS

I'm sorry - I'm not in the blessing business.

HILARIO

No, no. We offer more than that. We could feed you every day.

TOMAS

And we have this.....

Out of a bandana, Tomas lays on the bed, we see, as he spreads it open---everything of value from the village; inexpensive jewelry, medallions, the Old Man's watch - etc.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

What's that?

TOMAS

It's everything we own, everything of value in the village.

CHRIS

I've been offered a lot for my work, but never everything.

MIGUEL

Would it be enough?

HILARIO

You see, if we could drive the bandits away - life could be very good in our village. But as it is. We could stand it a little longer. But the children. They cry because they're hungry.

MIGUEL

We will fight too. Every one of us.

TOMAS

When Calvera comes, the church bell will ring the alarm.

HILARIO

We'll fight with guns if we have them. If we don't, with machetes, axes, clubs, anything.

There is a pause. Chris looks at the determined faces before him.

CHRIS

Do you understand what it means to start something like this? Once you begin, you have to be prepared for killing and more killing and still more killing until the reason for it is gone.

MIGUEL

We understand.

HILARIO

We've considered that.

CHRIS

Now, does every man in the village feel the same?

(CONTINUED)

15

CONTINUED:

TOMAS

Every man.

A long pause. Chris considers it.

CHRIS

I'll see what I can do for you.

HILARIO

Gracias - you ----

Chris raises a hand to stave off their gratitude.

CHRIS

Now - wait. I didn't say I'll
go. I'll just pass the word you're
looking for men.

HILARIO

It won't be hard to find men here.
Everyone wears a gun.

CHRIS

Sure - as they do their pants. Because
it's expected. But good men, that's
something else again.

MIGUEL

How can you tell if they're good?

CHRIS

There are ways.

DISSOLVE TO:

16

INT. CANTINA - NIGHT

The Cantina is a small bar, a quiet place in the Mexican
quarter for the not very well-to-do. A hooded lamp casts
a glow over the center of the bar and soft shadows else-
where. Half-a-dozen MEXICANS are seated and standing here
and there, quietly talking.

A formidable man named TURNER enters, looks around and
then goes to the BARTENDER.

TURNER

Who's looking for men here?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

BARTENDER

(points)

Back room - down the hall.

Turner goes down the hall toward a back room.

17 BACK ROOM - NIGHT

The three villagers sit at a table facing the door. Chris leans against the wall nearby. There is a KNOCK on the door. Nodding to Hilario, Chris moves so that he will be standing behind the door as it opens.

HILARIO

Come in.

Turner enters and as he crosses the threshold, Chris reaches forward and, snatching Turner's gun from the holster, holds it on him.

In one smooth, blinding-fast series of linked movements, like a well-rehearsed pas de deux in a ballet, Turner whirls, knocking the gun aside, "shoots his cuff" with his other arm and a derringer pops into his hand as he turns on Chris. Chris slaps the derringer aside and out of his hand and Turner whips a knife from his boot with his other hand as he leaps back into a knife-fighter's crouch, ready to defend himself.

CHRIS

(to the Villagers)

Good, isn't he?

TURNER

What's going on here?

CHRIS

Just trying to find out what kind of a man you are.

TURNER

(steamed)

Get a knife and let's see what kind of a man you are.

CHRIS

Now, take it easy. I'm offering you a job.

TURNER

And the job is?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

17

CHRIS

(picking up and
returning the
derringer)

Food and lodging for four to six.
weeks. Twenty dollars in gold.
Against thirty guns.

TURNER

(cutting in)

Me and you against thirty?

Chris returns Turner's six-gun.

CHRIS

No, we'll have more.

(indicates Hilario
and the others)

These people and all the men in
their village.

Turner puts away his guns as he looks the three Villagers
over, then turns to Chris.

TURNER

I like your style. And if I knowed
your name, I'd vote for you next
election. But your deal stinks.

He starts out the door.

CHRIS

No hard feelings?

TURNER

No hard feelings.

He opens the door and exits. Another knock on door.

CHRIS

Come in --

CHICO

(enters)

The word's out you're looking for
good men.

CHRIS

That's right!

(indicating
Chico's gun)

Men who are good with that.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

CHICO
I'm good with it.

CHRIS
Fast?

CHICO
Try me.

CHRIS
I aim to.

Chico watches Chris warily, as Chris holds his hands about twenty inches apart at waist-level and quickly claps them together.

CHRIS
(continues)
Step up closer - hold your hands like that. Clap them!
(puzzled, Chico obeys)
Faster.
(Chico claps again)
Now as fast as you can.

Chico tenses, preparing himself, then claps his hands with all the speed at his command. And finds between his palms the muzzle of the six-gun Chris has drawn and inserted. Chris holsters his gun and spreads his hands.

CHRIS
Now you do it!

Chico looks at the three villagers out of the corner of his eye and licks his lips, terribly afraid of failing. His hand tenses above the butt of his gun, relaxes, tenses once more. He seems about to draw. And then, abruptly, he spins around and rushes out of the room.

The three Villagers are ashamed. Miguel pulls the brim of his hat down over his eyes. Hilario finds Chris studying them, sensing their dejection.

HILARIO
(apologetically)
He's very young and very proud.

CHRIS
Yeah - graveyards are full of boys who were very young and very proud.

There is a KNOCK at the door. Without a sound, Chris steps to the wall so that he will be behind the door when it opens and motions to Hilario to let the visitor in.

HILARIO

CONTINUED:

17

The door opens, but nobody comes in. Hilario looks to Chris and shrugs. Chris looks out into the hall and finds no one there. Puzzled, he leans forward for a glance to the right down toward the bar. The hall is empty. Turning, he sees HARRY LUCK beside him, stocky, past forty, deceptively bland.

HARRY
(warning finger high)
No tricks now, Chris.

Chris crosses out into hall.

CHRIS
Harry! Good to see you again.

HARRY
Chris.
(shaking hands)
What are you doing in this dump?....
I heard you've got a contract open.

CHRIS
It wouldn't interest a high-stepper like you. It's just eating-money, Harry. One gold eagle, room and board, six weeks gunning for some farmers.

HARRY
Ah, you old Cajun - you don't talk so good but you always know what's goin' on.

(to Villagers)
Con permiso --
(closes door)
All right, that's on top. What's underneath?

CHRIS
Only what I told you.

HARRY
Gold? Cattle? Payroll?

CHRIS
Only what I told you!

HARRY
Oh sure, sure. Never mind. Just tell me when you can.

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED:

CHRIS

Harry, please don't understand me
so fast.

HARRY

I said never mind. I'm in.
(pokes his ribs)
You dirty dog.

DISSOLVE TO:

18. EXT. STREET AND SALOON - NIGHT

Vin rides into the street at b.g. - rides to front of
Saloon and enters.

19. INT. SALOON - NIGHT

Vin enters the saloon - looks around - he crosses over
to a dice table. He watches the play for a moment, lips
pursed in concentration. The SHOOTER is having a winning
streak. A lot of whooping from those backing his play.

Vin's hand drifts to his hat - extracts two dollar bills.
Unfolds them carefully. This is no casual fling, but a
studied, calculated investment.

Chris is in one of the booths lining the wall opposite the
bar with Hilario, Miguel and Tomas. They have been there
awhile scrutinizing and evaluating likely prospects. Miguel
indicates the GUNMEN who has just entered.

TOMAS

That one, maybe?

CHRIS

No.

TOMAS

Why not? He has notches on his gun.

CHRIS

Yes, I noticed.

TOMAS

Well?

CHRIS

Would you care to work with a man
who keeps score?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The waiter comes up to Chris.

WAITER

Yes?

CHRIS

(looking over to Vin
at crap table)

The cowpoke who just came in --
with the stove-pipe chaps -- I'd
like to buy him a drink.

WAITER

Yes, sir.

The waiter crosses over to Vin at crap table.

MIGUEL

Valgame Dios, there's one. Just
look at his face.

Miguel refers to a FLUG-UGLY who just entered the saloon -
his nose has been flattened and his face is scarred.

HILARIO

The man for us is the one who
gave him that face.

CHRIS

You learn fast.

Vin puts down the two dollars. Rolls dice - CRAPS!
Vin blinks a couple of times, puzzled by the suddenness
with which he has been rendered cold, stony broke. The
waiter taps him on the shoulder, points off.

WAITER

Gent over there wants to buy you
a drink.

Vin walks over to the booth occupied by Chris and the
Villagers.

CHRIS

Vin.

VIN

Howdy.

CHRIS

Like to buy you a drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

VIN
(to the waiter)
Whiskey.

CHRIS
Got something lined up?

VIN
Yup. I'm gonna take a job in a
grocery store. Fellas who runs it
thinks I'd make a crackerjack clerk.
Crackerjack.

CHRIS
Well, if that's your taste...

VIN
I did hear of a job below the border.
Shooing flies away from some village.
Can't find out what it pays.

CHRIS
Twenty dollars.

VIN
A week?

CHRIS
Six weeks. The whole job.

VIN
That's ridiculous. You heard of
anything?

CHRIS
Below the border. Shooing flies away
from some village.
(indicating the farmers)
Their village.

VIN
Pays twenty whole dollars?

CHRIS
I'm looking for men right now.

Vin turns to Hilario, Miguel and Tomas.

VIN
That wouldn't even pay for my
bullets.

(CONTINUED)

12
CONTINUED:

HILARIO

(apologetic)

I'm sorry. Ours is not a rich village.

A grunt from Vin.

MIGUEL

We understand. You would get much more in a grocery store. And it's good, steady work.

VIN

(to Chris)

How many you got signed up?

Chris holds up one finger. Vin shakes his head, holds up two fingers. He tosses off a drink.

DISSOLVE TO:

20

HOUSE ON A PLAIN - DAY

Chris and Vin ride towards the farmer's hut. They ride into front yard. The plain is vast and empty except for the sod hut with a rickety corral alongside and a well in front. Chris and Vin dismount, hitch their horses to a rail and approach the front door. The door opens - a farmer sticks his head out.

CHRIS

I'm looking for a man named O'Reilly.

FARMER

Don't know his name. But there's a feller in back chopping wood for his breakfast.

Chris nods his thanks and, with Vin, walks around the hut to the rear.

O'REILLY, a very competent-looking man, half-Irish, half Mexican, this side of thirty with an habitual mad-at-the-world scowl, is splitting wood with an axe. His jacket and hat are on a bucksaw. His gun-belt and gun are on the ground at his feet between him and the hut. He straightens and stands motionless when he sees Chris and Vin, eyeing them impassively as they come to a halt half-a-dozen feet away.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

Morning.

O'Reilly thinks about it a moment, then toes his gun and holster across the ground to a spot on his other side, away from them. That done, he goes back to chopping wood.

CHRIS

(continues)

I'm a friend of Harry Luck's.
Tells me you're broke.

O'REILLY

Nah. I'm doing this 'cause I'm
an eccentric millionaire.

CHRIS

There's a job for six men to watch
over a village south of the river.

O'REILLY

(chopping away)

How big's the odds?

CHRIS

Thirty guns.

At this, O'Reilly misses the log completely and almost falls down. Recovering, he stares at Chris.

O'REILLY

I got to admire your notion of
fair odds.

CHRIS

Harry tells me you faced bigger odds
in the Travis County war.

(nods) O'REILLY

They paid six hundred for that one.

VIN

He also said you wrapped up Salinas
single-handed in less than a month.

O'REILLY

(nods)

They paid me eight hundred for that one.

VIN

You cost a lot.

O'REILLY

Yeah, that's right - I cost a lot.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

The offer is twenty dollars.

O'Reilly looks at the logs he has split and at the pile left to go.

O'REILLY

Twenty dollars -- Right now that's a lot.

CHRIS

Where can I reach you?

O'REILLY

Right here.

He splits another log.

DISSOLVE TO:

21

LINE CAMP - DAY

The camp has been set up across the tracks from some loading pens filled with bawling cattle. Lounging about a remuda and a chuck-wagon are the SCORE OF MEN who have herded the cattle here from the range. Waiting for their pay, some of them play mumblety-peg or cards.

A man, WALLACE, is having a difference of opinion with two other men.

Chris and Vin have ridden up during this and stand near their mounts, watching.

WALLACE

I still say he can't.

FILENE

I tell you he can.

WALLACE

If he claims that, he's a liar.

FILENE

(looks around quickly)
Come on - not so loud, he might hear you.

WALLACE

I don't give a damn if he hears me or not. I got two months wages coming and I'll bet it all it ain't so.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

COWPOKE

Well, you ain't betting with me.

FILENE

Me either. I'm just telling you what he said. And I believe him.

WALLACE

Well, one of us is a fathead.

COWPOKE

You can get odds on which.

Wallace turns on him in anger.

SOMEONE

(laughs)

Haw haw haw.

As Filene turns away in dismissal, Wallace looks at the men around. None seems the least impressed with what he is saying and this makes him even angrier. He goes over to a man sitting near the chuck-wagon, a tall, tall puncher stretched out on the ground dozing with his back against a fence and his hat pulled down over his face.

Chris and Vin ride in.

WALLACE

Britt. Britt. Wake up. Britt - look at me. I'm talking to you.

For a moment, BRITT seems not to have heard him. Then a thumb slowly pushes the hat up and he is gazing calmly at Wallace.

WALLACE

(continues; pointing to Filene)

Filene told me what you said. I say you're wrong. What do you say?

No one moves while waiting to hear what Britt says. Then he pinches his hat-brim between a thumb and forefinger and slowly pulls the hat back down over his face.

SOMEONE

(laughs again)

Haw haw haw.

And stops suddenly when Wallace glares at him.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALLACE

What's the matter?

(looking down
at Britt)Afraid to say I'm wrong?

Again the thumb slowly moves the hat up off the face and Britt's calm eyes hold Wallace's. Then, in one smooth, flowing motion, Britt is on his feet and moving toward fence-post twenty feet away. He puts his coffee can on top of a post about 3" from his shoulder then turns to face Wallace. He motions with his hand and Wallace, glancing behind him, finds a similar post nearby. One step and he is standing next to it. But this isn't close enough to suit Britt who motions again. Wallace sidesteps until the post is at his shoulder. Britt nods, satisfied, and then looks to Filene.

Nervously, Filene steps forward, about half-way between the two men and out of the line-of-fire. He looks at Wallace who crouches, ready to draw, his eyes on Britt. He looks at Britt, who stands easily, casually tugging at an ear-lobe.

WALLACE

(to Filene)

Call it!

Filene fires gun in air. Britt's hand streaks down from his ear, as though throwing a ball, and a knife quivers in the post at Wallace's side. At the same moment, POW! Wallace has fired and the coffee can is knocked down. Britt crosses over to Wallace - gets knife out of post.

WALLACE

(triumphant -
to Filene)

Well, you see? I won. Well, how about it? Filene, how about it?

Britt crosses away over to the chuck-wagon.

FILENE

I don't know. Mighty close, wasn't it, boys?

WALLACE

Close? Close? What do you mean close?

He hurries over to Filene and a knot of punchers gathers around them.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

WALLACE

(continues)

You all got eyes, ain't you? You saw
the whole thing, didn't you? I won.

With a growl, Wallace hurries over to Britt who is just
taking a drink of coffee.

WALLACE

(to Britt)

You tell them. I won, didn't I?

BRITT

(a barely
perceptible headshake)

You lost.

Britt crosses over to the fence, lies down. And the
hat is down over his face. Wallace is beside himself
with rage. Crosses to Britt.

WALLACE

You're a liar.

(no response)

I said you're a liar.

(no response)

You're a coward and a liar.

(no response)

Get up and let's do it for real.

(fires 2 shots at Britt's
feet)

Get up, I said - get up -- or I
swear I'll gun you right where you
are.

A long moment passes and then Britt's thumb slowly pushes
the hat up. Britt's calmness has gone and his eyes are
now like ice. He gets to his feet and moves deliberately
back toward the fence-post. Wallace crosses over to his
post. Britt turns and finds Wallace ready.

WALLACE

(eyes on Britt -
to Filene)

Call it.

FILENE

(crosses to Wallace on
line)

I don't want nothing to do with it.

WALLACE

Call it.

(CONTINUED)

21

CONTINUED:

Filene moves to stop him.

FILENE

Come on, Wallace -- forget it!

WALLACE

Get away from me!

The buzz of the onlookers' excited conversation stops abruptly as they realize the game has ended and that they are watching a contest that could end in death.

CHRIS

(to Vin)

It's ridiculous -- and so obvious!

Wallace is immediately aware of the meaning of this sudden silence. Almost wishes he could withdraw, but a glance around at the men who ridiculed him rekindles his rage. Tensing, he glances at the post beside him, takes his stand directly in front of it, his eyes on Britt.

BRITT

(to Filene)

Call it.

Filene, hating to do it, pulls gun out and fires up into air. Wallace crumples to the earth with Britt's knife in his middle.

SILENCE

Slowly, Filene and the others move toward Wallace. Britt stands where he was, looking at the body. It's hard to say what his feelings are. Certainly not jubilation.

Then he turns on his heel to walk toward his saddle and finds himself facing Chris.

CHRIS

Britt!

BRITT

Chris.

VIN

Howdy.

CHRIS

Have a word with you?

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. CANTINA -- NIGHT

It's late. The cantina is nearly empty. The bartender is reading a newspaper. At a table are Hilario, Miguel and Tomas, waiting with stoic patience. Nearby are O'Reilly and Harry Luck. Harry is playing solitaire, handling the cards with loving dexterity. O'Reilly watches him without expression. Each of the two is nursing a beer. All heads turn to the door as Chris and Vin enter. Vin stops at the bar. Chris sits with the Villagers.

VIN

(to bartender)

Wine.

The three Villagers exchange anxious looks. Harry and O'Reilly wait. Miguel clears his throat. Hesitantly.....

MIGUEL

Did you have luck?

CHRIS

I found a man who would have been perfect. Gun or knife, they don't come any better.

(a pause)

Wasn't interested.

The villagers deflate. They sense that Chris is discouraged, too.

HILARIO

The money? It was not enough?

CHRIS

Doesn't give a hoot about money.

HILARIO

(as delicately as possible)

A man in this line of work who doesn't care about money?

CHRIS

(politely)

Men in this line of work are not all alike. Some care about nothing but money. Others, for their own reasons, enjoy the danger.

VIN

And the competition.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

MIGUEL

If he's the best with the gun and the knife, with whom does he compete?

CHRIS

Himself.

WHAM! Their heads swivel and they see Chico. He has come banging through the double doors. He needs a shave. His eyes are inflamed. He peers around, focuses on Chris, starts for him.

CHICO

(waving a finger)

You. I've been looking for you.

Now we know. He is carrying quite a load of bottled courage. He staggers slightly, grips hold of a chair to support himself and his self-esteem.

Hilario, Miguel and Tomas immediately recognize the menace. Vin, however, has never seen Chico before. Therefore, he's amused by the little borracho's noisy appearance and erratic progress across the floor.

VIN

Oh, oh. What have we here?

CHICO

Never mind. Never mind. He knows. Clap hands, he says. Clap your hands. Let's see how fast you are.

(with drunken dignity)

Man comes to him 'cause he respects him, 'cause he'd be proud to work with him.

(sudden rage)

And he tries to make him look like two cents with some damned kid's game!

He stops, just a few feet away from Chris, his hand threateningly near his gun. Vin doesn't think it's funny now. He has grown tense. So have O'Reilly and Harry.

BARTENDER

Hey, you. Kid. That's enough of that.

From below the bar he hoists the familiar bartender's peacemaker, a short heavy skull-cracker. He starts around the bar.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHICO

(to bartender)

You stay away from me. Will you?

(to Chris)

Now, you. Come on. Let's see how fast
you are. No games. No clapping hands.
None of that. Come on. Come on! Draw.

MIGUEL

(pleading)

Campesino --

CHICO

Did you say Compesino? Get out of
the way, you dirt farmer!

Chico's head is momentarily turned. O'Reilly and Harry,
seated to one side, start to rise. Chico's gun is instantly
in his hand. They freeze. Chris and Vin haven't moved.

CHICO

You don't think I mean it? You
think I'm just talking?

He SHOOTS, deliberately missing Chris by an inch. SHOOTS
AGAIN and AGAIN, smashing both beer glasses on Chris's table.

CHICO

Get up! Get up and face me!
Do you hear me? Get up - do you hear!

He loses his equilibrium, and falls back to the bar.
Drops gun on bar - tries to reach it.

CHICO

(to Bartender)

Hey, you - give me my gun back -
huh!

His head slides off the bar and he falls to the floor -
passes out. Chris crosses to the Bartender.

CHRIS

Sorry this happened, friend. Let
him sleep it off. And when he
wakes up -

(slides gun
along bar)

--let him have his gun back.

(puts down a coin)

And give him a drink.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

As he turns back he stops short at the sight of Britt looming in the doorway.

BRITT
I've changed my mind.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. OFFICE OF CHRIS'S ROOMING HOUSE - NIGHT

The clerk is behind the lobby desk as Chris and Vin enter at door. Chris holds out his hand for his key.

CLERK
There's a man waiting in your room. He said he was a friend of yours.

Chris and Vin walk out of the office. CAMERA PANS them along sidewalk to door of Chris's room. Vin stays behind as Chris opens the door and steps back.

INT. CHRIS'S ROOM - NIGHT

The door opens, revealing a youthful face in which there is no trace of expression. Not the kind of face you'd care to meet in the dark. Nor in the daylight for that matter. The face of a man utterly devoid of feeling. His name is LEE. He is sitting on the bed.

LEE
Remember me?

Chris and Vin enter room.

CHRIS
Yeah!

Lee dresses well, with here and there a touch of elegance - his fine boots and hat, a pair of gloves looped in his belt. His manner has more than a touch of arrogance. His voice strangely soft, is further slurred with a Southern accent.

LEE
You need men for a job in Mexico.

CHRIS
That's right.

(CONTINUED)

24
CONTINUED:

LEE

How long?

CHRIS

Four, six weeks.

LEE

That ought to do it. How much does the job pay?

CHRIS

I thought you were looking for the Johnson brothers.

LEE

I found them.

(a significant pause)

How much does the job pay?

CHRIS

Twenty. We leave tomorrow.

LEE

I'll have the money before I leave - it will just take care of my last two days' rent.

Vin has been studying Lee, not especially liking his acid condescension.

VIN

Twenty dollars - you must be living in style.

LEE

Yes, I have the most stylish corner of the filthy storeroom out back. That and one plate of beans, ten dollars a day.

Vin catches on.

VIN

Yeah, things do get kind of high when they find out you're on the run.

Lee stares at him coldly. Then turns to Chris.

LEE

There's a dry wash south of town.
(rises from bed)

Pick me up there.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Lee goes out. Vin reacts as to a chill wind passing through. He whistles softly.

CHRIS

Uh huh. But he's handy with a gun.
And we're not heading for a church
social.

DISSOLVE TO:

OPEN COUNTRY - DAY

The sun flames just above the horizon. In single file, the Villagers and the gunfighters ride slowly across a plain.

Chris leads, Hilario behind him, (or perhaps beside him?). Then the others.

The way they ride tells us quite a bit about the gunmen:

Chris, erect and calm, a man born to authority, therefore, with no need to assert it.

Vin with that slouch of his, taking things as they come.

Britt, hat pulled down, silent, anonymous, complete in himself.

Harry, with his simple, happy-go-lucky expectation of good things to come.

O'Reilly, the sour, hard man with a gun, disenchanted with everything, himself in particular.

Lee, reins held delicately in his gloved hand, an air of being along merely for the ride, disdainful of this whole ridiculous enterprise.

As they make a sharp turn to the left and start up a rise, Vin notices something far off on the back-trail.

VIN

Chris.

Chris glances off. A half mile away, a mounted figure is following them.

CHRIS

(nods)

Yeah. He picked us up at dawn.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRY
(calls to Chris)
Any idea who it is?

CHRIS
That kid in the saloon. Won't
take no for an answer.

VIN
(looking off)
Doesn't show much sense, does he?

DISSOLVE TO:

26 Foothills - DAY

The column is profiled against a tall butte, picking its way over rocky ground. Still far behind, Chico follows at their pace.

HARRY
(rubbing his neck)
I'm getting a stiff neck keeping track of him.

O'REILLY
If you can't forget him why don't you ride side-saddle?

HARRY
(ignoring this)
Ah, well, he won't last much longer.

O'REILLY
Think so?

Vin is also watching Chico.

VIN
Riding out there in all that dust and heat -- what a chuckle-head.

CHRIS
Yeah, not smart like us?

VIN
(not getting it)
Hmm?

DISSOLVE TO:

27

ENCAMPMENT - LATE DAY

A fire is burning low, a coffee-pot heating. The Villagers and the gunfighters, some of them dry-washing tin-plates and knives, are grouped around Hilario who has made a mock-up of the village and its terrain with pebbles and twigs. Vin and Harry are listening with half an ear, their eyes on a small fire far away and Chico's figure near it.

VIN

Suppose our friend over there has anything to eat for himself?

HARRY

(disturbed; to Chris)

How about I go over there and bring him some.

CHRIS

It's not food he's hungry for.

HARRY

Then let me tie a can to his tail. Right now he's like an itch I can't scratch.

CHRIS

Let him alone. It's a free country.

O'REILLY

And it's his.

28

MOUNTAIN PASS - DAY

The file is climbing, following a narrow, winding trail which makes it impossible to see if Chico is still following.

29

MOUNTAIN STREAM

Chico is in the stream, crouched motionless, his hand in the water. A swift motion and he has a fish in his hand. He admires it, then tosses it out on the bank. Chico crouches again, his hand snaking slowly into the water - catches a second fish - throws fish to bank - PAN with fish to bank.

DISSOLVE TO:

30 HIGH RIDGE - LATE DAY

The file moves slowly toward us, still climbing. Reaching the top, everyone looks back. Behind them, the empty trail, the open country stretching to the horizon. No sign of Chico.

HARRY

(rubbing his neck)

Funny. Now that he's gone - I kind'a miss him.

The trail leads sharply down to...

31 THE MOUNTAIN STREAM

Attached to a tree, in plain sight, is a fine string of fish, an eloquent invitation to dinner. Chris and the others react as to a mirage. They look off. Upstream, not far away, is Chico, seated on the ground, cooking fish, all innocence. Chris looks at the fish, then off at Chico. Chris can hardly keep from laughing. With a broad scoop of his arm he waves to Chico to come join them. Chico's not looking at Chris, but he sees the gesture, all right, out of the corner of his eye. He gets up, not hurrying, his face wearing a faintly disdainful expression, as if to say, "Maybe I will, and maybe I won't."

DISSOLVE TO:

32 MOUNTAIN COUNTRY - DAY

The riders coming around the bend in single file. Chris in front. Then Vin, Britt, Harry, O'Reilly and Lee. With them now, near the end of the file, is Chico.

33 EXT. TRAIL - DAY

JAIME, an eight-year old boy, hides at f.g. in ditch.

The Gunfighters and Villagers ride in on trail at b.g. They ride past the boy.

As they go by - the boy rises and crosses out on the trail - he takes off his hat and waves to another village boy far up on a mountain, b.g. The boy on the mountain waves his hat towards o.s. boy RICO at river.

34 EXT. RIVER - DAY

The village boy Rico sits against a tree by the river. He is throwing rocks to b.g. river with a slingshot. Suddenly he looks towards O.S. mountain and reacts to O.S. boy waving hat. He rises and runs to b.g. across the river.

He crosses the river and runs up on a rock wall - takes his hat off and waves it to O.S. boy on rock mountain above the village.

35 VILLAGE - DAY

A little boy sits above mountain at village. Looks O.S., reacts to O.S. boy at river - rises - turns to village and hollers, waving his hat.

BOY

They're coming - they're coming!

36 EXT. RIVER

The three Villagers and gunfighters ride thru.

37 VILLAGE OUTSKIRTS - DAY

The three Villagers and the gunfighters ride past the burial-ground and through the fields toward the village. Hilario, Miguel and Tomas are puzzled when the Villagers working in the fields completely ignore this arrival. Chris and the others glance at each other.

They enter the village.

38 VILLAGE - DAY

Coming between the two houses flanking the entrance to the plaza, Hilario slows his pace, visibly upset by what he sees. Or, rather, what he does not see. For the village is empty, with not a soul in sight.

HILARIO

(calls)

Where is everybody? Where are they,
Tomas?

TOMAS

(shouts)

Luis! Asuncion! Demetrio!

(CONTINUED)

3^a

CONTINUED:

MIGUEL

Eusebio!- Sotero!- what kind of a
reception is this?

HILARIO

Come out. Come out and make them
welcome before we die of shame.

OLD MAN'S VOICE

(calls)

Hilario!

The Old Man stands in the doorway of Sotero's.

OLD MAN

(continues)

Stop your shouting.

Hilario turns toward Chris, who nods and dismounts. The
other gunfighters follow him to Sotero's.

HILARIO

(to the Old Man)

Do they call this a welcome?
What are they thinking of?

OLD MAN

(ignores Hilario; to
the gunfighters)

Come in. You must be thirsty.

MIGUEL

Sotero!

Sotero, apprehensive behind the counter, starts pouring
drinks. The Old Man scans the faces of the gunmen, one
by one, measuring them. Inevitably, his eyes return to
Chris, recognizing him as the leader. Abruptly, waspishly...

OLD MAN

You must excuse them. They're
farmers here. They're afraid of
everyone and everything. They're
afraid of rain and no rain. The
summer may be too hot, the winter too
cold. The sow has no pigs, the farmer's
afraid he may starve. She has too many
pigs, he's afraid she may starve.

CHRIS

There's no need to apologize.
(for Hilario's benefit)
We didn't expect flowers and speeches.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD MAN

Good. Tomorrow it's the anniversary of the founding of the village - they will be celebrating - then you will see them in a better light. Till then --

Suddenly, the church bell starts to CLANG deafeningly, and -

A VOICE

(screams)

Calvera is coming, Calvera is coming!

Sotero hurries out. The others follow.

The plaza is now full of confused, noisy panicked villagers.

CONCEPCION

Where is he? Who saw them?

DEMETRIO

Where? Where?

EUSEBIO

Who saw them coming, who?

PEDRO

Did the boys signal?

ARTURO

Where is he, where is he?

FLACO

Which way is he coming?

SOTERO

Who sound the alarm?

(at the top
of his voice)

Who sound the alarm?

CHICO'S VOICE

(just as loud)

I did.

He stands at the top of the church tower sneering at the villagers. He is sore - doubly so because he is a Mexican and so are they. He exits down.

(CONTINUED)

38 CONTINUED:

CHICO

(comes out church doors;
withering contempt)

Thank you, amigos, for coming out to
greet us. Thank you for letting us see
your beautiful faces. Thank you, thank
you.

(utter disgust)

You chickens! You come running out
like chickens!

He marches down the steps and across the plaza, shouldering
people aside.

CHICO

We ride for days to get to this -
this nothing in the middle of
nowhere. We're ready to risk our
lives to help you. And you - you hide
from us -- hide from us!

Chico climbs up on rim of fountain. The Old Man cackles.
He's enjoying this. The gunmen exchange looks.

CHICO

(continues)

Ah, but it's a different story when
you're in danger, hah? And you might
lose your precious crops? Oh, yes.
And you flock to us. Well, we're
here, my compadres and I, and here we
stay - and you - you prove to us that
you're worth fighting for -- alright
now, get back to your houses! Back to
work! We'll let you know when to fight
and how to fight. Go back! Go! Go
back, all of you - go back!

The Villagers, awed and humbled, drift away. Chris is
tickled by Chico's impudent assumption of authority.
Impressed also by his scathing oratory. He grins.

CHRIS

(to Hilario)

Now we are seven.

DISSOLVE TO:

30

PLAZA - DAY

1st torito is ignited. Crowd fights it. FLUTES squeal, DRUMS rattle and crash and crude figures of Conquistadores and Aztecs, monstrous in size and fierce of face, wildly bob and weave against the sky, depicting in mimic battle the legendary origin of Ixcatlan.

They are part of a dancing, chanting procession working itself up to a frenzy as it circles the plaza, now profusely decorated with flowers, new corn and paper lanterns. About a third of the villagers actively participate in this ritual.

The remaining inhabitants, in holiday dress, are watching it and sharing the emotion, many in front of their houses, some grouped at the fountain and others at Sotero's.

40

SOTERO'S - DAY

Hilario and Chris are among those drinking there. Vin and Harry are sitting at a table. They watch the procession.

VIN

You know, I've been in towns where the girls weren't very pretty, in fact, I've been in some towns where they were downright ugly. But this is the first town where there's no girls at all. Except small ones. I can see we're going to have a very active social life.

HARRY

Oh, it's not so bad. I fell in with a fast crowd yesterday that hangs out near the fountain. We got to predicting the weather for today and didn't break up till twilight.

41

PLAZA - DAY

The procession is now passing and the clamor is deafening. The man leading the procession stops it and orders that the second torito be ignited.

MAN

(in Spanish, to crowd)

Paren la musica - siga el otro torrito!

The crowd screams and hollers as it fights the second torrito.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

The scowling O'Reilly has been leaning against a post watching the proceedings. With his knife he has been making a whistle out of a stick of bamboo. As the procession breaks up, a family with three small girls stands at front of him as they watch the crowd fight the torrito.

O'Reilly's attention goes to the small girls. He shows the whistle to the children. He blows it. The girls turn to look at him. He blows it again. This time he offers it to the child nearest him. She takes it.

The boy Rico comes hurrying into the plaza from the fields. He stops by a tree in the plaza. Chico has been sitting up in the tree. The boy, searching for someone, sees Hilario with Chris at their table and hurries over to him. Rico reaches Hilario's table and tugs at Hilario's shirt for attention.

RICO

Hilario!

He whispers something to Hilario that makes him stiffen with alarm. While the others are engrossed in the procession, he turns to Chris and drops a bombshell.

HILARIO

Three of Calvera's men just rode into the woods.

CHRIS

(to Rico)

What are they doing?

RICO

I don't know. They left their horses in the arroyo.

HILARIO

Should I sound the alarm?

CHRIS

No, they'd know we spotted them. Come on.

Chris, Hilario and Rico cross thru the crowd, fighting the second torrito and make their way towards Lara's house.

Chico up in the tree reacts to this. He gets down from tree and follows thru crowd.

Chris, Hilario and Rico go past O'Reilly and Lara's house.

Chico exits into the house next to it.

EXT. LARA'S BACK PORCH AND YARD

42
Britt is stretched out on the ground, hat over his face, much as we first saw him at the Line Camp. Lee sits b.g. on porch chair. As Chris, Hilario and Rico enter, the hat is raised with the familiar thumb-and-finger motion. He may have been asleep, but those piercing eyes are instantly alert.

CHRIS

Britt, the boy saw three of Calvera's men. Horses are in the arroyo.

In a smooth, flowing motion, Britt is on his feet. Britt looks off towards Lee. He knows he needs another gun to back him up.

BRITT

(calls to Lee)

Lee.

CHRIS

Get one alive.

RICO

I'll show you where.

Britt picks up his saddle & gear from ground and crosses over to the back yard gate. Rico is instantly there, opens gate for Britt. Britt steps out. Hilario crosses over to Rico and stops him from going with him.

HILARIO

(to Rico)

Rico, he knows where the arroyo is.

With this he leads Rico back towards Chris and the three of them exit towards front door of Lara's as Lee comes off the porch and follows towards O.S. Britt.

Chico has been overhearing the above in the yard next to Lara's. He ties his holster strap, ready for action, and follows in the direction of Britt & Lee.

43
EXT. PLAZA - DAY

O'Reilly is standing by pole watching the proceedings as Chris, Hilario and Rico come out of b.g. Lara's house. Chris comes over to O'Reilly, whispers to him. O'Reilly nods and walks toward the church.

(CONTINUED)

23
CONTINUED:

Chris glances across the plaza. A kind of telepathy has alerted Vin and Harry. Vin lifts a questioning eyebrow. Chris shakes his head and gestures to them to stay where they are.

Now Chris turns to the festivity with an appearance of interest. But after a moment, his glance goes to the surrounding mountains and then about the plaza, estimating possible defense positions.

DISSOLVE TO:

44
EDGE OF FOREST - DAY

Britt and Lee walk up trail at mountain side.

45
FOREST - DAY

Three horses are tethered among the trees. One of them stamps and softly nickers.

At the sound, Britt and Lee, entering through the trees, stop short. Veering to the right, they go to their hands and knees at the bottom of a mound and crawl to the top. Britt comes up at top and, finding a tree to rest against, seats himself on the ground, stretching his legs and makes himself comfortable. Lee fades behind a tree to cover him.

Prone behind a bush a few yards away, Chico cautiously lifts his head to see what they're doing. He marvels at the sight of Britt casually plucking a wildflower and dreamily sniffing it as he twirls it between his fingers.

46
EXT. PLAZA -

In the village, the Deer Dance is going on.

47
BACK TO CHICO

At a sound behind him, Chico whirls, leaping to his feet and going for his gun.

Calvera's THREE MEN are as startled as he is. As they reach for machetes and six-guns, Chico fires. One of them lurches back and falls heavily. Another, his blade about to split Chico's head, drops as Britt shoots. The third man immediately darts for one of the plunging horses, mounts and is off through the trees. Impossible to hit him.

(CONTINUED)

47 CONTINUED:

Britt rises, quickly estimates the terrain, starts walking, gun in hand, to a position several yards away.

CHICO

I'm sorry, Britt - I didn't mean to spoil it.

BRITT

Shut up.

Arriving at his chosen vantage-point, Britt waits, his eyes on the man escaping through the dense, screening growth.

The only gap lies between two trees at the top of a rise. Britt fires in the split-second the rider fills it and tumbles him from the saddle.

CHICO

That was the greatest shot I've ever seen.

BRITT

The worst. I meant to get the horse.
(cutting Chico short)
I wanted to get one alive!

48 PLAZA - DAY

The Deer Dance has frozen in its tracks and the plaza is silent. Everyone is staring in the direction of the shots. Chris throws his cigarette away - looks up to O.S. belfry - crosses towards fountain - Hilario follows.

The men wearing the huge masks of fierce Conquistadores and Aztecs raise them to reveal their own contrastingly apprehensive faces -- among them Miguel & Tomas.

Chris's eyes are on the belfry. O'Reilly is there, surveying the woods across the open fields. He glances down at Chris and shakes his head; he sees nothing yet.

CHRIS

(turning to the villagers)
Three men were sent by Calvera to spy. It's almost certain they saw us.

His attention is drawn by movement in the belfry.

40

BELFRY - DAY

O'Reilly is looking out in the distance.

50

BELFRY - DAY

O'Reilly looks down at the plaza, nods reassuringly.

51

PLAZA - DAY

Chris turns back to the Villagers.

CHRIS

Whatever they learned, it will
be buried with them.

CONCEPCION

Valgame Dios, if he comes now.

Hastily, he crosses himself at the thought.

CHRIS

But he'd never send men ahead if
he's close enough to see for himself.
So we have time. And we have something
Else. Surprise. And I promise you,
if he rides in with no idea of the
reception we can prepare for him, I
promise you we'll all teach him something
about the price of the corn.

DISSOLVE:

52

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Vin and Britt are instructing Eusebio, Concepcion and
Demetrio in aiming and firing guns. Britt is monotonously
repeating the routine.

BRITT

Aim, squeeze, cock.

The Villagers are slow in catching on. Vin takes the gun
from Eusebio.

VIN

(to Eusebio)

Thumb - eh amigo, with the
thumb.

(CONTINUED)

52

CONTINUED:

The routine continues, with Britt again repeating the practice count several times.

BRITT

Aim, squeeze, cock.

53

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Chris, O'Reilly and Harry are instructing Hilario, Tomas, and Miguel in target practice.

O'REILLY

(to Miguel)

Settle down, if you miss the first time, you may not get a second time.

CHRIS

(to Hilario)

Keep the butt tight in your shoulder. If you don't, two things happen. First, you waste a bullet, second you break your arm.

HARRY

(to Tomas)

Now close one eye.

(indicating the sights)

Aim from here to the target.

TOMAS

That rock?

CHRIS

That man you're going to kill.

FIRES.

CHRIS

Bueno.

MIGUEL

If only we had more guns, what we could do!

O'REILLY

You'll get more guns.

MIGUEL

How?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

(points to three guns)
The same way we got those. From
Calvera's men.

HILARIO.

The ones who came to spy on us.

TOMAS

Like Three Kings bearing gifts.

O'REILLY

All right, Miguel - squeeze slowly -
slowly!

He puts it tight against his shoulder, squinting coldly
thru the sights.

EXT. PLAZA - EVENING

Chris, Vin and Hilario building rock wall. Concepcion,
Chapo, Pedro and Arturo carry rocks from b.g., dump them
at f.g. and exit out b.g.

HILARIO

How long do you think it will take
to be ready? - I mean, really ready?

CHRIS

If we work straight through, maybe
two days -- three days.

HILARIO

And our next ten years of good luck,
hah?

VIN

Make it twenty.

DISSOLVE TO:

PLAZA - LATER THAT NIGHT

Around the perimeter of the village, most of the gaps
between the houses have been filled with waist-high walls.
The workmen, Harry included, are pretty well tuckered.
Tomas stops to massage his back.

CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

TOMAS

If Calvera doesn't come after all
this, what a waste.

HARRY

Pretty foxy fellow, this Calvera, eh?

MIGUEL

Senor, not fox. A coyote.

Harry lights a cigarillo. In a nice, chatty way...

HARRY

How did he ever find out about
the gold mine?

TOMAS

Gold mine?

Everybody stops work. This is an interesting question.

FLACO

(politely)

What gold mine, Senor?

HARRY

You know. The one in the mountains.

FLACO

In our mountains?

TOMAS

We never had a gold mine around
here.

HARRY

Come to think of it, maybe it
was a silver mine. Whatever
happened to it?

FLACO

We have no silver mine either.

HARRY

I mean in the old days.

MIGUEL

Not at any time.

FLACO

Where did you hear of this gold
and silver?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Harry, about to reply, sees Chris a short distance off. Isn't sure whether Chris has heard him or not.

HARRY

(briskly)

All right, come on, boys. More work and less talk, huh?

They all go back to work. Chris smiles to himself and walks off.

HILLSIDE - DAY

Chico and his squad of three boys have finished cutting saplings. The burros are loaded. The party is making its way down to the village in single file, Chico at the rear, leading his horse.

The laden burros come down out of the woods to a level, grassy area. Chico leans down from horse at the side of the brook to take a drink. He twists around, hearing the SOUND of an animal approaching. A lone, long-horned cow is staring at him.

Chico dismounts swiftly, whips off his jacket, adopts the proud, haughty air of the torero. Brandishing the jacket, he moves in on the beast.

CHICO

Toro! Ha! Entrale Torrito!

Closer and closer, recklessly exposing himself to the cruel horns. Finally he's on one knee, staring directly into the animal's sad, liquid eyes, Chico sighs, reaches out, pats the cow on the head and scratches her ears.

CHICO

Good cow!

Abruptly the play-acting is over. Chico hears something. He whirls around, gun in hand. A slight movement in the bushes. He rises, mounts horse - rides away. He rides into trees by river - dismounts and hides by trees. PETRA runs from b.g. as she passes CAMERA - Chico steps out from behind tree. Stops her.

PETRA

You do anything to me and I'll kill you. I'll kill you. While you're doing it.

(CONTINUED)

56

CONTINUED:

CHICO

You little chicken brain, you
almost took my eye out.

PETRA

Let me go. Let me go.

CHICO

(as she tries it)

You bite me - I'll bite you so help
me. I got a good mind to throw you
in the water.

PETRA

Smash you with a rock. Cut your
head off,

CHICO

Stop it. Shut up - shut up - shut up!
Where are the others?

PETRA

I'll never tell you.

CHICO

Oh, for God's sake.

Bending and pulling, he manages to get her over his
shoulders. Holding her tight, as she kicks and screams,
he starts toward his horse.

DISSOLVE TO:

57

NEAR VILLAGE - DAY

Chris is helping with the ditch being dug by Hilario and
his crew. It has now assumed considerable proportions.
All work stops at the SOUND of an approaching horse.

Chico jogs in, Petra slung over his lap like a sack of
meal. The bandana is off. Very clearly it's a girl, a
matter of keen interest to Vin.

CHICO

Look what I found.

CHRIS

Who is she?

(CONTINUED)

63.
CONTINUED:

Chris looks at Hilario. An embarrassed moment. The other gunmen drift into the scene.

HILARIO

From our village.

CHRIS

So there's where they were. You hid them.

Chris comes out of ditch and over to Chico - Vin b.g. follows. Vin leans down to get a better look at Petra. Chico pushes her off, onto her feet.

CHICO

Sure they hid them and she won't tell where. They're afraid. She's afraid of me. And you.

(pointing to Chris)

And him. All of us. Farmers! Their families told them we'd rape them.

THERE IS A LONG SILENCE.

CHRIS

Well, we might.

(at their surprise)

In my opinion, though, you might have given us the benefit of the doubt. But - just as you please.

VIN

As long as you were out there - why'n't you bring 'em all in?

CHICO

What for? Leave 'em out there. Let Calvera find them. He'll take good care of them.

CHRIS

Bring them in Chico.

(to Petra)

Show him where!

VIN

(helps Petra up on horse)

Ma'am!

CHICO

Come along, little angel.

(CONTINUED)

57- CONTINUED:

He snatches Petra up onto his lap in front of him. Vin winces. Chico turns the horse - rides away to B.G.

VIN

(almost inaudibly)

Gently boy, gently.

There's an awkward moment. Chris appears to have forgotten the whole thing. He's inspecting the ditch.

CHRIS

Well, we're getting there. You had a good idea, Hilario, It's going to work.

HILARIO

If I'd known it was going to be so much trouble, I'd have kept my mouth shut.

HARRY

(swinging a pick)

Amen.

They all go to work.

DISSOLVE TO:

58

LARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Most of the gunmen are here, sitting at the table. Lupe, the widow of Rafael, is doing the cooking over the brazier. The gunmen are being served by Petra.

Petra now wears a dress. Vin very much admires the change. Chico seeks to give the impression he is totally unaware of her existence.

She approaches, glaring at him. He turns his head to one side, holding out his plate. She ladles out a big spoonful, moves around so that he can see how much she hates him. Another spoonful. Chico turns his head disdainfully in the other direction. She ladles out a third spoonful. Chico lowers his head and starts eating. Burning with frustration, Petra walks on to Vin. He gives her a big, beaming smile.

VIN

I can't tell you how nice it was of you senoritas to fix this very nice dinner for us.

Petra slaps one spoonful on his plate and walks on. Vin gazes at his meager helping, then at Chico's overflowing plate.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Vin gives him a look which says, "How do you like that?" Chris responds with one of those shrugs, to wit, "That's life."

O'Reilly walks in, looks around.

O'REILLY

How's the food?

HARRY

Great!

O'REILLY

Carne osada, chicken enchiladas
and Spanish rice?

HARRY

Yeah, these people sure know how to
cook. There's plenty of it. Dig in.

O'REILLY

You know what - these people have been
eating since we got here? Tortillas
and a few beans. We got the rest!

Everybody stops eating.

DISSOLVE TO:

59. OUTSIDE LARA'S - NIGHT

Most of the small boys of the village are lined up. Each one has a clay bowl. Harry holds the pot. Vin distributes the food.

1ST BOY

Gracias, senor.

VIN

Por nada.

2ND BOY

Gracias, senor.

VIN

Por nada.

3RD BOY

Gracias, senor.

(CONTINUED)

59

CONTINUED:

He's a handsome boy with a flashing smile. Vin studies him.

VIN

You don't happen to have a grateful older sister?

3RD BOY

No, senor, gracias, Senor.

VIN

Por nada. (dully)

DISSOLVE TO:

60

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Gun practice is going on again. The Villagers are prone on the ground, firing at a target. O'Reilly is standing over Miguel, who grits his teeth, closes his eyes, pulls the trigger. POW!

O'REILLY

Miguel, how many times do I have to tell you? You're not milking a goat.

O'Reilly grabs the gun, jams in another cartridge. Miguel is disgusted with himself.

MIGUEL

It's just I get excited.

O'REILLY

Well, don't get excited - squeeze. Try it again.

(hands gun back to Miguel)

Slow now. Slow. Squeeze it. Squeeze it. Slow.

POW! O'Reilly takes the gun.

O'REILLY

Tell you what. Don't shoot the gun. take the gun like this and use it like a club.

(CONTINUED)

60 CONTINUED:

CHRIS
(calls to O.S. Flaco)
Flaco --!

Flaco enters to take Miguel's place.

61 EXT. CORNFIELD AT CORN SHED - DAY

Hilario, Tomas and Miguel, with the assistance of Vin are working on a net across road at b.g. They stop.

HILARIO
Water, Tomas.

TOMAS
Si.

They cross over to their water gourds under corn shed. Vin follows. As the three Villagers drink, Vin practices a few fast draws with gun. Tomas is impressed by the speed with which Vin draws. As Vin holsters gun, he catches Tomas watching him.

VIN
Oh ---playing around.

TOMAS
Vin, would you show me something?

VIN
(turns to him)
Huh?

TOMAS
Show me how you draw?

Vin's answer is a fast draw and a couple of shots at some other water gourds hanging inside corn shed. Vin holsters gun, turns to Tomas.

VIN
I wonder if I could have some of that water?

Tomas offers him water. Vin takes it.

VIN
Thank you.

DISSOLVE:

62

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Vin and Britt are holding gun practice again with Eusebio, Concencion and Demetrio. The Villagers' progress is much better than in previous practice scene. Britt is counting off routine much faster than before.

BRITT

Aim, squeeze, cock.
(repeats line
several times)

Vin is not watching the practice, and is looking off away from the men.

P.O.V. FROM VIN

Petra and the Village girls are washing clothes on river rocks. Their scrubbing seems to be in tempo with Britt's counting.

BACK TO VIN, BRITT AND VILLAGERS

BRITT

One, two, three four --
(repeats count)
(Vin joins in)
One, two, three, four, - one,
two, three, four.

DISSOLVE TO:

63

EXT. RIVER - DAM - DAY

A dam is being finished by some of the villagers. Chico walks along the river, measuring the depth of water held back by dam. He walks past Villagers.

CHICO

Bien -- bien -- muy bien.

64

EXT. ROAD PASS INTO VILLAGE - DAY

Britt, with the help of O'Reilly is showing villagers how to raise and drop a net across the road at pass.

BRITT

(to men)

Pull it up -- tighter -- pull it up
-- tighter -- all right, drop it.

The men drop the net.

DISSOLVE TO:

THE OLD MAN'S HOUSE - DAY

The Old Man is seated on porch. Chris & Vin ride up trail - into yard - dismount.

OLD MAN

Buenas tardes.

VIN

Howdy!

CHRIS

Well, we came to move you into the village.

OLD MAN

Move into the Village? Me?

CHRIS

Not just you. Everybody who lives outside.

OLD MAN

Oh no, not me!

CHRIS

We can't protect you if you stay here.

VIN

A fellow named Rojas is making room for you in his home.

OLD MAN

Rojas -. His conversation would bore me to death.

VIN

Yeah, well -

(sits)

Maybe somebody else.

OLD MAN

They're all farmers. Farmers talk of nothing but fertilizer and women. I have never shared their enthusiasm for fertilizer. As for women I became indifferent when I was eighty-three. I'm staying here.

VIN

What are you gonna do when Calvera comes?

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

OLD MAN

At my age a little excitement is welcome.

(and then)

Don't worry. Why would he kill me? Bullets cost money.

CHRIS

All right. Have it your way.

OLD MAN

You worry about yourself. Are you ready for him? What if he comes now? Hah? Hah?

VIN

Reminds me of that fellow back home - who fell off a ten-story building.

CHRIS

(intrigued - as
Vin mounts)

What about him?

VIN

People on each floor as he was falling - people heard him saying, "So far, so good - so far, so good."

The Old Man cackles.

DISSOLVE TO:

66

EDGE OF TOWN - DAY

Chris and Vin ride by, reach an elevation overlooking the village. They take a long look around.

VIN

First of all he's gonna see that ditch.

CHRIS

More water for the corn.

VIN

Awful lot of new walls. He sure can't miss that one by the Cantina.

CHRIS

Civic improvement.

(CONTINUED)

66

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

(continuing; mumbles)

Don't know what we're trying to do -
gonna get us all killed.

VIN

And what about the net?

CHRIS

If he's not looking for it, if he
rides in unsuspecting....

VIN

If - if --

CHRIS

Yeah!

Chris and Vin exchange one of their eloquent looks, which
Vin sums up with an eloquent ---

VIN

Yeah.

67

HILLS - DAY

JAIME, a village boy, sits by goats - looks off. Rocketing
birds take to the air abandoning some carrion on which they
have been feeding at the bottom of an arroyo. They have
been disturbed by -

Calvera jogging down toward the village followed by some
forty men in ragged column formation, much as when we
first saw them.

Jaime rises and steps up closer to trail. Seeing Jaime,
Calvera looks at him, and Jaime, taking off his hat, waves
a bit more broadly and at greater length than might be
thought necessary. Jaime, in fact, waves his hat to
everyone in the column. Several respond. Boy up on b.g.
mountain rises and waves his hat.

68

EXT. RIVER - DAY

Rico, resting against a tree, sees boy on mountain waving
in the distance and, turning toward the village, jumps up
on the rock wall and waves his own hat.

69

EXT. VILLAGE - DAY

Another boy sits up on a rock on hill above the village. He stands, watches for a moment, then calls, waving his hat down to village.

BOY
(pointing)

Hilario.

70

PLAZA

All around the plaza, people stop in their tracks to look at the boy. Then they gather at a vantage point in a group around Chris. From here they can see the tiny figure of Rico signaling in the distance.

No one says a word as they steel themselves for what is to come. Then each man starts for his pre-determined position.

71

FOREST - EXT. RIVER - DAY

Calvera and his men pour down a slope and jog into the forest.

72

FIELD - DAY

Three farmers stand in the field looking toward the forest.

73

EDGE OF FOREST - DAY

Calvera and his men emerge, ride past the burial-ground and then through the field toward the village.

Approaching the three farmers in the field, Calvera waves. One of them crosses himself. And then, when the last of the column has gone by, the three move quickly along the trench to its end near the river.

Here, a reinforced embankment is all that keeps the water flowing in its normal channel. Picking up mattocks and a spade concealed in the undergrowth, the farmers start hacking at the embankment. The water spurts into the ditch.

74

FIELD - DAY

Calvera and his men ride at a jog through the harvested fields into the village.

PLAZA - DAY

Calvera leads his men into the plaza and halfway across before he realizes something is amiss. He reins in sharply and Cirilo and the riders behind him bunch as they come to a halt.

Chris, armed and poised, stands facing him in front of Sotero's. Britt and Vin are on his flanks.

Calvera's eyes dart about the otherwise empty plaza and then return to Chris. In silence, they study each other. Calvera nods.

CALVERA

I should have guessed. When my men didn't come back, I should have guessed.

He looks around at the roofs, the doorways and the side-yards behind their walls.

CALVERA

How many of you did they hire?

CHRIS

Enough.

Calvera stands in his stirrups and points.

CALVERA

A new wall.

He spurs forward a few feet for a more comprehensive survey.

CHRIS

Lots of new walls. All around.

Calvera returns to his column and faces Chris again.

CALVERA

They won't keep me out.

CHRIS

They were built to keep you in.

Some of Calvera's men ride to the front of Sotero's.

CALVERA

(turns to his men)

Hear that? We're trapped. All forty of us. By these three.

(to Chris)

Or is it four? They couldn't afford to hire much more than that.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

HARRY

We come cheaper by the bunch.

During this O'Reilly and Chico appear across from each other on the perimeter of the plaza. Calvera spots them. His men shift restlessly.

CALVERA

Five. Even five won't give us too much trouble.

CHRIS

There won't be any trouble. If you ride on.

CALVERA

Ride on? I have to go in the hills for the winter. Where am I going to get food for my men?

CHICO

Buy it. Or grow it.

O'REILLY

Maybe even work for it.

CALVERA

Seven! Somehow, I don't think you've solved my problem.

CHRIS

Solving your problems isn't in our line.

VIN

(flipping a bullet)

We deal in lead, friend.

CALVERA

So do I. We're in the same business, eh?

VIN

Only as competitors.

CALVERA

(to Chris)

Why not as partners? Suppose I offer you equal shares?

(CONTINUED)

76 CONTINUED:

CHRIS

In what?

CALVERA

(embracing the
village)

Everything. To the last grain.

CHICO

And the people in the village -- what
about them?

CALVERA

I leave it to you. Can men of our
profession worry about that? If
God didn't want them to be sheared,
he wouldn't have made them sheep.
What do you say?

CHRIS

Ride on.

Calvera stands in his stirrups, raising his voice,
addresses the unseen villagers.

CALVERA

Did you hear that, Sotero? Did
you hear what he said? Ride on.
To me. Tell him to ride on before
I get angry. Him and the others.
Because if I leave here with empty
hands, everybody in the village will
answer to me when I come back. Do
you hear me, all of you?

CHRIS

You won't come back.

CALVERA

Why not?

CHRIS

You won't have any guns. Take
them off right now and drop them.

Calvera turns in his saddle to address Cirilo for the
benefit of the others.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CALVERA

Generosity. That was my mistake. I left them a little extra and they used it to hire these men to make trouble. It shows you - sooner or later we have to pay for every good deed.

He sits motionless in his saddle for a moment, then abruptly explodes into action. With a yell that galvanizes his men, he draws his gun and, spurring his mount, gallops at Chris, shooting.

Around the plaza, Vin, Britt, Lee, Harry, O'Reilly and Chico duck for cover and open a rapid cross-fire.

Calvera's men, racing after their leader, spray bullets in all directions.

Gun blazing, Chris leaps back, takes cover behind wall, as Calvera, Cirilo and two others try to ride him down.

Calvera and his men ride around plaza fountain and towards B.G. down the street towards entrance into village. As they near village, Villagers raise net across road. The bandits stumble into the yet.

Eusebio and a few other Villagers fire at bandits. Two bandits fall from horses. Calvera and his men turn their horses. Some of the bandits ride away down the main street. Calvera and Santos ride into a side street. Chris, behind rock wall, fires at bandits riding thru towards the cornfields.

O'Reilly up on roof fires same. Harry, taking cover at side of Lara's house, fires same. Lee, petrified with fear, crouches by doorway of house next to Lara's as bandits ride thru. Britt, taking cover behind table under Sotero's porch fires at O.S. bandits riding thru towards cornfields.

Vin, inside Sotero's, fires same.

Calvera and Santos ride thru back yards of houses, jumping horses over yard walls. As they ride past back of Sotero's, Cirilo and group of bandits join them. They ride away thru cornfield and escape to b.g.

Vin runs out of Sotero's and mounts his horse at the back of the building. He gives chase into the cornfields, firing at the escaping bandits. Chico comes out from behind the church and fires towards the cornfields at the escaping bandits.

(CONTINUED)

75

CONTINUED:

Some of the bandits are trapped in the mud of the flooded area of cornfield. Tomas yanks a bandit off horse and kills him with his machete.

Hilario, Miguel, Flaco, Arturo and other Villagers under the corn shed in cornfield, fire at the escaping bandits.

Calvera and the rest of his men gallop off in disarray toward the hills, encouraged with a few parting shots.

Silence, except for the dwindling sound of galloping hooves.

Eusebio and Villagers at net road block come out from behind rocks. React to escaping bandits. Eusebio reacts to bandit he killed. O'Reilly and Britt react to fight being over. Lee, covered with sweat, breathing hard, is utterly spent. He rises, walks into the street. Reacts to the end of battle and the bandits defeat.

O'Reilly swings down from the roof, looks towards the cornfields at escaping bandits. Chris, rises from behind the rock wall, crosses out into the street, looks after the escaping bandits, reacts to the end of battle.

Vin, riding in the cornfield, stops his horse, dismounts, reacts to the escaping bandits. Looks back towards O.S. village.

Hilario, Miguel and others under corn shed in field, react to the escaping bandits. Look at each other, almost in disbelief, as it comes to them that they have actually defeated the bandits.

Tomas, in a trance and shoulder wounded, walks in the corn field. He stops - looking off at escaping bandits.

Chico, in the church graveyard, reacts to the triumph of the Villagers and Calvera's defeat.

DISSOLVE TO:

76

EXT. ROCK WALL BY BLACKSMITH SHOP - SUNSET

Harry, Pedro and Arturo are on watch at wall. In the b.g. Chris and Vin, returning from a reconnaissance, cross thru on their way to the plaza.

HARRY
(calls to b.g. Chris)
Any sign of them?

(CONTINUED)

76

CONTINUED:

CHRIS
(moving on)

None.

PEDRO
That is bad luck.

Harry regards the Villager curiously.

ARTURO
Imagine. I knew him when he
was a mouse.

77

INT. SOTERO'S - . SUNSET

Sotero's is crowded. The farmers are still in high spirits. Everyone is talking at once. Most are armed for their turn on guard-mount.

The largest group is at the counter drinking, bulling and speculating. Britt is seated inside.

TOMAS
You were safe by your house. I
was out in the field, face to face
with them. They came at me, ten of
them, screaming like devils...

MIGUEL
Last time you told it, it was only
five.

HILARIO
He has them multiplying like
rabbits.

TOMAS
Ten! Ten!

HILARIO
Make it eight, hah? Leave two
for the rest of us to fight!

EUSEBIO
Eight, ten, a hundred, what's the
difference? They got a good kick
in the behind.

MIGUEL
If they try it again, they'll get
another!

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

This gets a general roar of approval.

CONCEPCION

We'll tear them to pieces.

This gets a louder roar.

FLACO

We'll bury them all. Calvera too.

In the rear counter, Sotero, Concepcion and Demetrio are in a huddle.

SOTERO

I was never so frightened. My knees were like jelly.

CONCEPCION

I would never have guessed it.

SOTERO

(brightening)

Well, he'll leave us alone from now on.

DEMETRIO

You think so?

SOTERO

Of course, he'll go away. There are other villages. Villages that don't sting the way we do.

He looks off as Chris, and Vin enter from the fields. They cross over to the porch.

SOTERO

Senor!

Sotero crosses out to the porch to Chris. The other Villagers follow. Tomas pours a drink for the new arrivals.

SOTERO

(to the Villagers)

Neighbors, I drink to our friends. They armed us, fought at our sides and will forever live in our hearts.

He touches his mug to Chris's and Vin's. With a yell the farmers lift their drinks in a toast.

(CONTINUED)

77

CONTINUED:

POW!

Sotero looks incredulously at the shattered mug. For a second there is a silence. Then another shot rings out, and ricochets off with a whine. They take cover. Chris dashes out thru the back door of Sotero's followed by Vin, Britt and Hilario.

SOTERO

(taking cover at door)

They haven't gone, then!

78

PLAZA AND PERIMETER - SUNSET

Chris, Britt, Vin and Hilario have moved like lightning to a rock wall from which they can observe the fire. More shots are heard.

Silence. From their various positions, the gunmen study the terrain from which the unseen snipers are shooting.

79

ROCK WALL - SUNSET

VIN

See the gun flash?

CHRIS

No. But I make it two of them.

BRITT

Three.

80

PLAZA - SUNSET

O'Reilly and Chico run from plaza and take cover at cemetery walls.

A silence. Chico appears with his rifle in hand and crosses from one building to another, deliberately offering himself as a target. He passes Petra's house. She is horrified. Chico runs across road opening towards next wall, exposing himself.

POW! POW! POW!

Chico's hat flies off. Bullets pock the wall at his side, as he throws himself behind it. Raising his rifle, he attempts to find a target.

81

ROCK WALL:- SUNSET

Chris sees this and simultaneously studies the source of fire. After a moment, Chico retreats his hat and puts a finger in the hole, grinning. The hat is pretty well ruined.

VIN

Crazy kid's goin' to get his head blown off!

CHRIS

Chico -- stay put!

BRITT

(studying the woods)

Three?

CHRIS

(nods agreement)

Three.

82

PLAZA - SUNSET

CHRIS

See anything?

Negative headshakes.

O'REILLY

Naw, they're too far back in the trees.

Chico puts his hat on, ready to draw fire again.

VIN

Chris, I'm goin' to try to make it to those rocks --

CHRIS

Yeah -- I'll cover you.

They run over to Chico and O'Reilly. Vin and Hilario run out B.G. past church. Chris stops by Chico.

CHRIS

(to Chico)

Cover the back door.

Chico exits. Chris motions to Britt. They snake around the corner of the wall, in the direction of the cemetery.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'Reilly covers Chris and Britt as the latter two exit thru cemetery and disappear uphill behind rocks. O'Reilly following, stops by tree in cemetery.

DISSOLVE TO:

OUTCROP - TWILIGHT

O'Reilly watches the dark woods. Hearing a scuffling, he whirls, his rifle at the ready.

Rico, Jaime and Julio are sneaking towards him from the village.

He motions for them to get out of sight.

O'REILLY

Get back. Get back.

The kids ignore this. Eyes wide with excitement, they crouch for a moment, then scuttle to join him, flopping down breathless at his side.

O'REILLY

Didn't you hear so good?- get down - now stay down! You might have been hurt.

RICO

So might you.

O'REILLY

It's not the same thing. This is my work.

JAIME

It's our work, too.

He and the others settle down beside O'Reilly and fix their eyes on the woods.

RICO

Everyone tells us hide, get back, stay out of sight. But we're not afraid.

JAIME

He's very brave. It's the truth.

RICO

So is he. We all are. Every boy in the village. We had a meeting and drew straws and we got you.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

O'REILLY

You got me? What do you mean got me?

JAIME

If you get killed, we take the rifle and avenge you.

RICO

And we see to it that there are always fresh flowers on your grave.

O'REILLY

That's a mighty big comfort.

RICO

(to Jaime)

I told you he'd appreciate that.

O'REILLY

Please don't be too disappointed if it doesn't work out as you planned.

JAIME

We won't. If you stay alive we'll be just as happy.

RICO

Maybe even happier.

JAIME

(judiciously)

Maybe.

84

SIDE-YARD - TWILIGHT

Rifle at the ready, Chico is kneeling behind a wall, eyes on the forest. At a rustling behind him, he turns his head and finds Petra approaching.

CHICO

What are you doing here?

Grabbing her wrist, he pulls her down beside him to the protection of the wall.

PETRA

You shouldn't do things like you did.

(CONTINUED)

ALL

CONTINUED:

CHICO

Go back!

PETRA

You mustn't take foolish chances!

CHICO

All right, I won't. Now, go back.

PETRA

(touches his cheek)

Does it hurt?

CHICO

What? No.

PETRA

I'm sorry I did it, but I thought...

(a shrug)

You know what I thought.

CHICO

Yes, I know. I know.

PETRA

I wasn't afraid of you. It's my father. He says stay away from those gunmen, they're cruel - they're brutes.

CHICO

He's right. Now, go back home.

PETRA

He's wrong.

CHICO

Well, go home anyway. Before he finds out you're here.

PETRA

He already knows. He said he'd punish me for being so shameless. But I don't care.

Chico has been listening with half an ear but, at the urgency in her voice, he looks at her and finds her level gaze upon him.

There is the sound of a distant shot. Then, after a moment, two more rapid successions.

Silence.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. HILL AND ROCKS - NIGHT

Vin and Hilario watch side by side from the embrasure. Finally, Hilario shifts nervously.

HILARIO

Can you see them?

VIN

No.

HILARIO

Do your hands sweat before a fight?

VIN

Every time.

HILARIO

Mine are sweating now. Funny. The hands sweat and the mouth is dry. You'd think it would be the other way around. Does my talking annoy you?

VIN

Uh-uh.

HILARIO

It's because I'm frightened.

VIN

I guess about now you kind of wish you'd let Calvera have the crop - huh?

HILARIO

Yes. And no. Both at the same time. Yes when I think of what he might do. No when I remember the feeling in my chest this morning as I watched him run away. From us. Man, that was a feeling worth dying for. Have you ever felt something like that?

VIN

Not in a long, long time. I envy you.

Both look off again.

86

INT. SOTERO'S

As Vin and Hilario enter, all eyes are on them, some with fear. Before Vin can answer their unspoken question, Chris and Britt appear. Chris is carrying three rifles which he drops on the table.

MIGUEL

They did it - they did it!

CHRIS

(to Hilario)

Pass these out.

Britt has two bandoleros, a gun belt and a six-gun over his arm. In his hand he carries an ornamented sombrero. There are exclamations of relief and amazement.

87

EXT. SOTERO'S WINDOW

Rico, Jaime and Juan peek into the room through the window.

JULIO

Maybe we should have drawn
them.

The others glare at him for this disloyalty.

88

INT. SOTERO'S

TOMAS

Think they'll try that again?

CHRIS

I doubt it. For all they know,
we're still up there ready to
jump them.

SOTERO

(almost accusingly)

He didn't go. Calvera didn't go.

HILARIO

(testily)

Do you think it would be that
easy?

(to Chris)

What do we do now?

CHRIS

What would you say?

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED:

HILARIO

Me?

CHRIS

We work for you, you know.

Hilario has never thought of it this way. He visibly grows.

HILARIO

What else is there to do but wait?
It's Calvera's move.

CHRIS

Right. You better relieve the
guards - they must be tired!

CONCEPCION

(unhappily)

If you were Calvera...?

CHRIS

Yes?

CONCEPCION

You'd go away, wouldn't you?
If you pay the price we make him
pay, would go?

CHRIS

Yes, I would. Only....

CONCEPCION

Only what?

CHRIS

I'm not Calvera!

HILARIO

(to villagers)

Take the rifles and the bandoleros
and pass them out. Now, let's get
out there on duty.

Hilario follows Chris and the gunfighters out. Sotero
looks after them.

SOTERO

(to his wife)

Food, woman, they'll be hungry.

TNT. LARA'S HOUSE - NIGHT

Chris, Vin and Britt enter. Chris and Britt cross over to the table. Vin crosses out into the porch.

Chico enters. His eyes are bright with admiration.

CHICO

(to Chris)

That was the greatest, the ---

BRITT

A new hat for you, sonny!

He sells him the bandit sombrero. Chico puts it on.

CHICO

How do I look? Hah?

VIN

Big improvement.

Chico goes to the mirror to admire himself.

CHICO

You know what? They'll make up a song about you and this hat. Villagers like this, they make up a song about every big thing that happens. Sing them for years.

CHRIS

You think it's worth all that?

CHICO

Don't you?

CHRIS

It's only a matter of being able to shoot a gun. Nothing very big about that.

CHICO

How can you talk like this? Your gun has got you everything you have.

(to the others)

Isn't that true? Isn't it true?

The gunmen exchange looks. Vin speaks for them all.

(CONTINUED)

88

CONTINUED:

VIN

Yeah, sure. Everything. After a while, bartenders and faro dealers you call by their first names: Maybe two hundred. Rented rooms you've lived in: five hundred. Meals you eat in hash-houses: a thousand. Home? None. Wife? None. Kids? None. Prospects? Zero.

(to Chris)

Suppose I left anything out?

CHRIS

Yes!

Lee enters. Has a drink in his hand, several under his belt. He holds himself with drunken dignity.

CHRIS

(continuing)

Places you're tied down to: None.
People with a hold on you: None.
Men you step aside for: None.

LEE

(with cold,
aristocratic disdain,
almost a sneer)

Insults swallowed: None.
Enemies: None.

Chris has been eyeing him closely.

CHRIS

No enemies?

LEE

Alive.

He walks on into the next room.

CHICO

This is the kind of arithmetic I like.

CHRIS

So did I at your age.

He hands Chico the captured bandoleros and six-gun.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

Now take these things and give them
to someone who can use it.

VIN

And while you're at it, why don't you
go ask Calvera what he's got in mind
for tonight.

CHRIS

Do that and I'll write a song about
you, myself.

Chico exits, still wearing the bandit sombrero.

DISSOLVE TO:

80. LEDGE AND ROCKS - NIGHT

Two of Calvera's men, RUIZ and SANTOS, in sombreros and
serapes, wearing crossed bandoleros and carrying rifles,
sit huddled side by side in the dark.

RUIZ

Now take beef, red peppers, onions,
salt, pepper - a little lard and a
large frying pan. After the beef has
been dried, you cut it into strips.
You put the strips in a pan with a
little lard. Then you put in the red
peppers and let them simmer. Maybe
ten minutes. Then the onions chopped
fine. Then -

A third figure, similarly dressed and equipped, comes
wandering toward them. Santos spots him and motions him
down.

SANTOS

Hey, stupid - get out of there - stay
out of sight.

The figure complies and, crouching, comes to their side.

RUIZ

- then you put in the salt, pepper
and let it simmer - then you eat.

The new figure grunts and takes out his cigarettes.
The eyes of the two sentries fasten hungrily upon this.
The new figure hands them the cigarettes.

(CONTINUED)

RUIZ AND SANTOS

Gracias!

FAMILIAR VOICE

Por nada.

Ruiz strikes match, lights Santos' cigarette. Then his own - then offers Chico a light. Chico, striking a match, lights his own.

CHICO

(refuses Ruiz's light)

Gracias.

RUIZ

De Nada.

By the light of the match we see the new figure is Chico wearing the sombrero, gun and bandoleros taken from the snipers.

CHICO

(blows out
the match)

Well, I'll see you later.

He rises, and exits.

RUIZ

My mother used to make a soup. - -

SANTOS

Shut up. You never had a mother.

90. EXT. CALVERA CAMP - NIGHT

Chico moves warily along the trail and stops when he hears a horse blowing. Following the sound, he comes across the entire remuda picketed for the night.

He moves along the line of horses till he hears men talking in low voices nearby.

CIRILLO

Andres, Lorenzo and Felipe never came back.

LEON

That's three. Armando was killed in the plaza.

(CONTINUED)

00

CONTINUED:

LEON

That's four.

CIRILLO

Then Memo and Gorge - they got it up
there in the pass by that cursed net!

As the voice drones on, Chico takes a deep breath and,
as casually as he can, moves toward the group.

LEON

Malditos - five and six!

CIRILLO

Then Emilio going over the wall.

LEON

Seven.

CIRILLO

Then Jose near the fountain.

LEON

Eight!

CIRILLO

Gregorio near the fountain.

A few heads turn toward Chico.

CHICO

That's nine.

CIRILLO

Nine - then Fortune by the water
ditch - Rico in the fields where they
slashed him to pieces.

CHICO

(aware of their
scrutiny)

That's ten and eleven. Go on.

The voices stop. All heads turn towards Chico. He tenses,
becomes aware of someone at his shoulder. Calvera is
standing beside him.

CALVERA

Talk'--talk talk - they're all dead.
Forget about them. There are still
enough of us here to make them pay,
our friends down below -- They'll pay -
they'll pay!

He takes out a cigarrillo and Chico lights it.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. LARA'S - BACK ROOM - NIGHT

Lee is sprawled out on the bed, asleep, his last drink spilled on the floor beside him. He is sweating, twisting, moaning. He gives an inarticulate cry. Rises from bed - crosses room and falls to b.g.

Tomas and Eusebio enter. They look at him for a moment, startled by the writhing terror of the fallen man. Lee's eyes open. With a cry he goes for his gun.

EUSEBIO

It's all right. You're all right.
You had a bad dream. Just a bad
dream.

Slowly Lee gains control of himself. They wait. He doesn't look at them. Stares off into space, still groggy, his voice thick with sleep and drink.

TOMAS

Have no fear, Senor.

Lee is struck by the irony of this remark. He speaks as though to himself, with quiet bitterness.

LEE

Have no fear. My very words.
Ten thousand times a day.

EUSEBIO

Senor, don't punish yourself.

TOMAS

A man who has fought so many times.
You must have great courage.

LEE

Oh, yes.

(rises - goes to
table)

Till the day you lose your nerve.
You feel it. And you wait. For
the bullet in the gun faster --

(sits)

--than yours.

TOMAS

Senor...don't!

LEE

No enemies. The lies you tell. To
fool yourself. No enemies left alive.
(a twisted smile)
I've lost count of my enemies.

(CONTINUED)

91

CONTINUED:

EUSEBIO

But now you are with friends.

LEE

And the final, supreme idiocy -
coming here to hide.

(almost laughs)

The deserter hiding out in the
middle of a battlefield.

(catches fly)

Once there was a time when I'd have
caught all three.

TOMAS

We know what fear is. We live
with it all our lives.

EUSEBIO

Only the dead are without fear.

92

EXT. PLAZA - NIGHT

WOMAN'S VOICE

Rico. Rico. Rico.

93

EXT. LARA'S BACKYARD AND PORCH - NIGHT

RICO'S VOICE

En momentito, mama.

Jaime, Rico, Juan and O'Reilly emerge from a doorway
near which Chris stands unobserved.

RICO

(whispering)

Ten minutes to pretend we're asleep.
Then we'll be back on duty. All
right, Senor Bernardo?

O'REILLY

Not you, Juan.

JAIME

(to Juan)

You're too young.

They scurry away. O'Reilly becomes aware of Chris.
His grin vanishes.

(CONTINUED)

93

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

Bernardo O'Reilly - you're been adopted.

O'REILLY

(after a pause)

It's my real name. Mexican on one side, Irish on the other. Me in the middle.

94

INT. SOTERO'S - NIGHT

Harry stands at the bar with Miguel, Tomas, Flaco, Chapo, Sotero and a few others. Before him on the counter there are three identical mugs in a row, bottoms up. He turns the middle one rightside up.

HARRY

Here we go.

Simultaneously he reverses mugs 1 and 2 - 1 is now rightside up and 2 and 3 are upside down. Simultaneously he reverses mug 1 and 3 - 1 and 2 are now upside down and 3 is rightside up. Simultaneously he reverses mugs 1 and 2 - all three are now rightside up.

HARRY

(continuing)

See? All three rightside up.

(to Miguel)

Think you can do it?

He turns the middle mug upside down.

MIGUEL

Of course. That's very easy.

Miguel reaches for the mugs. Harry stops him. Affably--

HARRY

Would you care to make a friendly wager? A little bet?

Harry brings out some money.

MIGUEL

Senor, you know we have no money.

HARRY

(casually)

Doesn't have to be money. Whatever you have hidden away - buried out where Calvera can't find it. Like - I don't know - jewels?

(CONTINUED)

ch

CONTINUED:

Miguel is preoccupied, studying the mugs.

MIGUEL

Jewels?

HARRY

They tell me a lot of precious stones have been dug out of the mountains. You know, opals, sapphires, emeralds...

MIGUEL

Oh, yes. Yes. That's very true.

FLACO

There's no denying it.

HARRY

(happily)

Well, then...

Miguel repeats the three moves with the mugs.

HARRY

No, no, you've got them wrong. When you're finished, they should be rightside up. Like this.

He turns the middle mug rightside up and repeats the three moves. When he's done, all the mugs are rightside up - as they always are if you start with the middle one that way.

HARRY

See?

FLACO

Let me try it.

Chris enters.

HARRY

Just a minute. About those precious stones, where are they found.

FLACO

As you say, senor, in the mountains.

HARRY

All right, but where in the mountains?

(CONTINUED)

ch

CONTINUED:

FLACO

That I couldn't tell you, senor.

He repeats the three moves. (Gets it right)

FLACO

There!

HARRY

Never mind that! Why can't you tell me?

FLACO

Because I have never found any precious stones.

Harry smiles through clenched teeth.

MIGUEL

Wait. You mean Aztec treasure, buried in the hills? From when the Spaniards came?

HARRY

(brightening)

That's exactly what I mean. Aztec treasure. You found some around here?

MIGUEL

Wish to God I had. I wouldn't be standing here. I'd be in the Big City living in a palace.

Harry seethes with frustration.

HARRY

Then, tell me this. How come Calvera keeps hanging around here!?

TOMAS

Calvera? We've seen the last of him. He'll be gone in the morning.

CHICO'S VOICE

No he won't. He isn't going anywhere.

Everyone turns. Chico enters.

CONCEPCION

Why do you say that?

(CONTINUED)

CHICO

Calvera isn't worried about food in the winter. He's worried about the food his men haven't eaten for the last three days. Price of corn is going up. They're starving.

SOTERO

How do you know?

CHICO

Starving and broke.

SOTERO

How do you know?

With studied casualness, Chico tosses the gun and bandoleros on the counter and pours himself a drink.

CHICO

(throws hat to Vin &
Britt's table)

Oh, I was up there.

Britt pushes back his hat, looks at Chico as though he had never seen him before. Chris and Vin are also staring at him.

CHICO

We'd better be ready for them.
They got to win or die.

FLACO

Valgame, Dios -- if they do win!

HILARIO

They won't win!

SOTERO

Are you God that you know for
sure?

CONCEPCION

We're surrounded! Out-numbered!
What are we to do?

CHRIS

Keep on fighting.

SOTERO

You want to see us killed off one
by one? This is not what we hired
you for!

(CONTINUED)

94

CONTINUED:

TOMAS

Once you start, there's no
stopping.

HILARIO

(to Sotero and
others)

You understood that. And I told
him.

SOTERO

(to Chris)

Go away. All of you. Get on your
horses and go!

DEMETRIO

Let Calvera have the food.

CONCEPCION

Give him what he wants. At least
we'll be alive.

HILARIO

Quiet! Listen to me!

SOTERO

No! It's easy for them to say fight.
They have no sons, no daughters, no
wives.

(to Chris)

Go away! Now! Before it's too
late!

Chris raises his voice, facing them all with mounting
fury.

CHRIS

Is that what you want? Answer me.
Answer me. Who's for going on?
Who's for giving up? I want to
know.

Hilario, Miguel, Tomas, Eusebio and a handful of others
gather at Chris's side. An equal number bunch in behind
Sotero. The rest are undecided.

SOTERO

(to the opposition)

Don't be fools! He'll turn our
village into a graveyard! Tell
him to go! It's the only thing
to do!

(CONTINUED)

24

CONTINUED:

CHRIS

I'll tell you what I can do. I
can kill the next man who so much
as whispers a word about giving up.
The very next man, so help me,
I'll blow his head off!

Chris glares at Sotero and his supporters, turns and
strides out, followed by Vin, Harry and Britt.

HILARIO

(to Sotero)

We started this fight and we're
going to finish it with our without
you!

He follows the others.

95. INT. LARA'S HOUSE

Chris enters and sits down. Pours a drink. His hand
is trembling with fury and the effort to control it.
During which, Vin enters, followed by Harry, Britt and
O'Reilly.

VIN

I don't say we bit off more'n we
can swallow. I do say we oughta
have a serious talk along the lines
of what do we do now.

HARRY

We start acting like we had good
sense. We figured to raise the ante
just enough to make Calvera play
someplace else. We figured wrong.

VIN

We didn't figure on being the only
game in town.

BRITT

A man can't call them all.

VIN

I didn't say you could. I'm only
saying, sometimes you bend with the
breeze or you break.

BRITT

You want to go?

(CONTINUED)

05

CONTINUED:

HARRY

Well, there comes a time when you turn mother's picture to the wall and get out. The village will be no worse off than it was before we came.

CHRIS

You forget one thing. We took a contract.

VIN

Not the kind any court would enforce.

CHRIS

That's the kind you have to keep.

VIN

That's a noble thought, but the way things are right now -- I don't know!

HARRY

The odds are too high.

CHRIS

Much too high.

HARRY

Then we go?

CHRIS

No. We lower the odds!

DISSOLVE:

96

INT. SOTERO'S

Hilario and a few others are there. Hilario is deeply depressed.

HILARIO

If they decide to go away, I wouldn't blame them. If I were them, I'd do the same.

He looks up to see Chris in the doorway.

CHRIS

We were just talking about that.

(CONTINUED)

OK

CONTINUED:

HILARIO

I don't wonder. I was proud of my village. Now I'm ashamed.

CHRIS

You don't judge a whole village by a few frightened men.

HILARIO

We promised you every man would fight. It's the very least we owe you.

CHRIS

I owe you much more. I can't remember how many times I've been hired to fight. This is the first time I ever felt I was fighting for something more than money.

In the faces of the Villagers we see what a lift this gives their morale.

CHRIS

We're going up and hit Calvera. Maybe we can run off his horses. Then if he attacks, he'll be on foot.

HILARIO

Let me go with you. I know every rock.

CHRIS

No. You're in charge here.

HILARIO

You can count on me.

CHRIS

I know I can!

He grips Hilario's hand, then walks out.

97

EXT. SIDEYARD - LARA'S

Chico is talking to Petra. She listens with half an ear, intent on something much more basic, her eyes on his cheeks, his hair, his mouth.

(CONTINUED)

CHICO

Right up into the hills...
past the men on guard...
right into their camp. I sat
there, I smoked a cigarette with
them. I talked to them. All of
a sudden there was Calvera himself,
right beside me. When I brought
the news back, you should have seen
the look I got from Britt. And
Chris. They've seen a thing or two
in their time, and done them, too.
They're not men you can impress
easily, no. But when they looked
at me, I knew I was one of them at
last.

Petra moves against him.

CHICO

(continuing)

You'd better take a look at me, too.
A good look. Am I the kind of man
who would live in a place like this?
Digging his life away out in the
fields? Me a farmer? A peasant?

He gives a snort of derision.

CHICO

(continuing)

You understand what I'm saying?
Wherever they go - Chris, Britt,
Vin, the others - I go with them.

Her arms go around him.

CHICO

(continuing)

And if you think you or anything
you do can make me change my
mind, forget it.

She is clinging to him, her mouth close to his.

CHICO

(continuing)

I want you to understand that - this --

Her silence tells him. He takes her in his arms and
kisses her.

(CONTINUED)

97 CONTINUED:

CHICO
(continuing)
--will get you nothing but this.

They kiss again - long kiss.

98 EXT. RIVER - NIGHT

The gunmen are riding toward Calvera's camp. Chico, having been up here before, rides in front with Chris, pointing the way.

Chico motions to Chris that they are near. Chris signals a halt. Vin, Britt, Harry and Lee ride in. The men dismount and tie their horses.

99 TRAIL

This is the same trail followed by Chico during his previous jaunt. He and Chris are leading the way. Slowly, cautiously, they crawl up a mound overlooking Calvera's Camp. O'Reilly covers at B.G.

100 CALVERA'S CAMP

Horses and men are gone. The camp is deserted.

CHICO
They've left to hit the village!

CHRIS
No, we'd have heard shots!

101 THE GUNMEN

Their reactions to what they see. Puzzled, startled, suspicious, etc.

DISSOLVE TO:

102 PASS LEADING INTO VILLAGE - NIGHT

Chris leads the way into the village, which is suspiciously silent. The gunmen dismount, spread out, taking cover in the shadows as they enter --

Chris looks off, stops short. The plaza is empty. Chris, Chico and Lee dismount and exit to porch. The doors of the store are open - Calvera comes out.

CALVERA

Buenos noches!

The store windows open - bandits level rifles at the gun-fighters. The gunmen look around. On rooftops, from behind walls appear Calvera's men, guns leveled.

CALVERA

You'll be dead like that! - If that's what you want.

CHRIS

We have a choice?

CALVERA

Of course - sit down - let's talk about it. Things are turned around now - ha - you wondering how? Your friends don't like you any more, hah? You forced them to make too many decisions. With me, only one decision - do as I say. So you should not be surprised that my good friend Sotero, he arranged to let me in!

Sotero and his wife are standing motionless and apprehensive. Nearby are several of the Villagers - Hilario, Miguel, Tomas, Chapo, Flaco, Eusebio. All are tied up. Some are wounded. They are guarded by Calvera's men.

CALVERA

Well, anyway to business -- I could kill you all, you agree?

(Chris is silent)

Well, you don't disagree - anyway, I don't want to kill you.

CHRIS

Why so generous?

CALVERA

Practical. They hear about it up north, maybe friends of yours. More trouble for me, a man who never wants trouble. We have saying here - a thief who steals from a thief, he is pardoned for one hundred years. All right, what does that leave? Only one thing. I pardon you!

(CONTINUED)

108 CONTINUED:

CHRIS
(snaps his
fingers)
- just like that?

Calvera snaps his fingers to indicate "just like that."

CALVERA
Yes - just like --- I make it easy
for you. You want food?
(to one of
his men)
Give them food.
(to Chris)
Drink? All right, drink. Horses?
(points to plaza)
They're saddled and waiting.
Guns?
(his voice alters)
Well, the guns you take off now and
put here -- now.

He taps on the table.

CHRIS
What about these people?

CALVERA
What happens to those people will
happen whether I kill you first or
not.

He rises - sits on top of table next to Chris.

CALVERA
(continuing)
It's only a little gesture, hah? To
show these people who is the boss.
You go -- then I give guns back.
I know you won't use those guns
against me -- only a crazy man makes
the same mistake twice.

Chris takes off his gun belt and looks towards the other
gunmen at their horses. They start towards Calvera - taking
off their guns and dropping same on the table during following.

CALVERA
(continuing)
What I don't understand is why a
man like you took the job in the
first place. Why? Hah?

(CONTINUED)

CHRIS

I wonder myself.

CALVERA

No, no, come on, tell me why.

VIN

(as he enters to Calvera)

It's like a fella I once knew in El Paso. One day he took off all his clothes and jumped into a mess of cactus. I asked him the same question. Why?

CALVERA

And?

VIN

He said it seemed like a good idea at the time.

Vin drops his gun atop table and walks b.g. to other gunmen. O'Reilly follows and does same.

Chico has been seething.

Chris looks at him and realizing what Chico is about to do, immediately crosses over to him, grabs Chico by the wrist as he is about to take his gun out. Chico fights back. Chris backhands him across the face, Chico throws the gun to the table.

CALVERA

Good.

(to gunmen)

Go get your clothes, your saddle-bags. Whatever else you want, take it. Your "friends" here owe you that much.

(turns to Santos and Cirillo)

Santos, pick up the carbines.

Cirillo - the guns.

DISSOLVE:

INT. LARA'S HOUSE

Chris and Vin enter. They cross to dining room table.

VIN

First time I took a job as a hired gun, fella told me you can't afford to care. It gets in your way. There's your problem....

(CONTINUED)

105 - CONTINUED:

CHRIS

One thing I don't need is somebody to tell me my problems.

VIN

(imperturbably)

Trouble is, you let yourself fall for this place and these people. No sense denying it. You're about as hard to read as a reward poster.

CHRIS

Do you ever get tired hearing yourself talk?

VIN

(without a pause)

Reason I understand your problem so well, it's because I walked into the same bear trap myself.

(a beat)

Day we arrived here, I began thinking - here's my chance to get rid of 'this'.

(taps his gun)

Maybe find a piece of land, settle down, where all they know about me is to my credit, even make up songs in my honor.

Chris stares at him. Vin shrugs.

VIN

You needn't think you're the only sucker in the world.

106 LARA'S - BACK ROOM

Rico, Jaime and Julio enter. O'Reilly is stuffing clothes into his saddle-bag. The boys go to him at the bed.

RICO

Can we go with you, Bernardo?

O'REILLY

(brusque)

No.

JAIME

You like us, don't you?

(CONTINUED)

106

CONTINUED:

RICO

You're one of us, aren't you?

O'REILLY

Yes, I'm one of us, all right.

RICO

Take us with you. Please.

O'REILLY

No!

JAIME

We're ashamed to live here. Our fathers are cowards.

O'Reilly reaches out and slaps him. Jaime recoils.

O'REILLY

Don't you ever say that again - your fathers are not cowards. You think I'm brave because I carry a gun - well your fathers are much braver because they carry responsibility. For you, your sisters and brothers, your mothers. It weighs a ton, it's got sharp edges and there's no rule that says they have to pack it. They do it because they want to. I was never brave enough to face up to anything like that. And running a farm, working like a mule every day with no guarantee anything will come of it - I've always been afraid of even starting something like that. It's why I never have. And never will.

He exits.

107

EXT. SOTERO'S

Four of Calvera's men, already mounted, hold the reins of seven horses. One of them is handed the serape with the gunmen's weapons. The gunmen are tying on their saddle bags. Calvera is chewing another tortilla.

(CONTINUED)

107

CONTINUED:

CALVERA

(to Chris)

You'll do better on the other side of the border. You can steal cattle, hold up trains, all you have to face is a sheriff or a marshal. I robbed a bank in Texas once and your government got after me with a whole army. A whole army. One little bank. The meaning is clear. In Texas, only Texans can rob banks. -- Adios!

Lee's head is lowered. The danger is past, but the shame persists.

Calvera flips Chris a salute.

The gunmen and their escorts start away.

108

PLAZA - NIGHT

The seven gunmen and their escort ride slowly across the plaza and out of the village.

109

EXT. SOTERO'S - NIGHT

Calvera watches the gunmen ride away. Abruptly ---

CALVERA

Sotero!

Sotero is immediately at his side.

CALVERA

There's no sauce like hunger - while we were up there in the hills, every time my stomach rumbled - I hated you - now I almost love you!

DISSOLVE TO:

110

STREAM - NIGHT

The gunmen and their escort ride slowly toward a broad, shallow stream.

(CONTINUED)

110 CONTINUED:

Three of the escort rein in. The fourth, carrying the food, drink and guns, follows the gunmen across.

The gunmen pull up on the far bank. Contemptuously Cirillo and Santos drop the bundles on the ground.

CIRILLO

Adios --

Then they wheel their horses, ride to b.g., other bandits follow.

Chico's fury explodes.

CHICO

(dismounts)

I could have told you they'd sell us out! Farmers. Farmers! No honor. No loyalty. All they care about is their precious crops, and the miserable dirt they dig in. I hate them! I hate them all!

CHRIS

Sure you hate them, because you come from a village just like that one. You are a farmer yourself.

CHICO

Yes. Yes! I'm one of them. And who made us the way we are? Men with guns. Killers. Men like Calvera. Men like you! And now me.

(wretchedly)

So what do you expect us to be?

Chris has been loading his gun. Britt has picked up his gun and wiped it off. Now he's loading it. Chris looks at him questioningly.

BRITT

Nobody throws me my own gun and says run. Nobody.

Chris looks at Vin.

CHRIS

Right!

VIN

It took me a long time to learn my elbow from a hot rock - right now I belong in that border town. Sleeping in between white sheets -- I'm going back to that village.

(CONTINUED)

HARRY

You're crazy, all of you. They won't lift a finger to help! Think of the odds.

O'REILLY

Harry, nobody's asking you to go back.

CHRIS

You ride on, Harry. It's all right.

HARRY

You bet your sweet life I will. Come on, Lee. If they want to get killed, let 'em.

CHRIS

Go ahead, Lee. You don't owe anything to anybody.

LEE

Except to myself.

The six of them mount and start back. Harry mounts.

HARRY

You're crazy, all of you!

He digs in with his spurs, rides off in the opposite direction.

DISSOLVE TO:

111. EXT. VILLAGE

Chris enters b.g. uphill on rocks. He comes down rocks and into the back yard of one of the village houses.

Vin enters into the yard of another house. As he cautiously crosses thru yard, one of Calvera's bandits spots him. Before the bandit can draw, Vin quickly draws and shoots him. The bandit falls, Vin runs thru the yard and bumps into two bandits who have been awakened by the shots. Vin kills them and runs out of yard. A bandit runs out of a house across the street.

(CONTINUED)

CONTINUED:

Chris reacts to O.S. Vin gun shots. He runs to the door leading to main street. He flings the door open and from the doorway fires two shots out into the street. He runs out into street.

Chris takes cover behind a tree on the plaza. He shoots a bandit and then another who comes out of b.g. house.

O'Reilly runs down from rocks into back yard of a house. He reacts to O.S. Vin gunshots and jumps up onto the roof of the house. He starts to make his way across roof tops of houses.

Chico comes down mountain side into back yard of a house. Hearing the O.S. shots he jumps fence and runs into the house thru back door.

Chico comes running out of the house. He fires at O.S. bandits, jumps over a wall into patio of another house. He stops for a moment and goes into the house thru patio door and comes out thru another door, and jumps head first over another rock wall. A bandit comes out B.G. He fires towards Chico. Chico runs to b.g. - winds up at corner of church.

Britt comes from b.g. and crosses thru blacksmith shop yard. As he nears yard wall, he reacts to O.S. Vin gunshots. He reacts to O.S. bandits run out into the street, fires at them.

Vin comes running thru the back yards of houses. He stops and kicks open a back door of one of the houses and fires three shots to inside of house. His gun empty, he holsters it and pulls out a second gun from back of belt and jumps over the back fence into Lara's house back yard. Two bandits run out on Lara's back porch. Vin shoots them. A bandit inside of Lara's breaks window of door and shoots Vin in the leg. Vin turns and kills him as Vin falls to ground. Vin rises, crabs his leg and runs into Lara's house thru back porch door.

Calvera, Santos, Cirillo and other bandits come out of a house across the street from Lara's. They react to O.S. Chris by tree. They fire at him. They react to O.S. O'Reilly firing up on top of roof-tops and to O.S. Britt also firing at them.

Chris runs across the plaza, gets pinned in doorway at house next to Lara's.

Calvera and the mob start for Chris.

(CONTINUED)

111 CONTINUED:

Harry rides in at the pass into the village. He is firing his gun at the O.S. bandits on street.

Calvera and the bandits with him flatten on the street. They fire at O.S. Harry.

As Harry rides towards Lara's, he and his horse are hit. The horse falls and Harry spills onto the street.

Chico runs out from behind church to plaza fountain. Fires at O.S. bandits.

Inside of Lara's, Vin ties a bandage around his leg. He reacts to the O.S. fight. He crosses over to the front door.

Chris runs from the doorway of the house where he was pinned, helps Harry and starts with him to Lara's as Vin opens door from inside. Vin helps Chris with Harry. They exit into Lara's.

Calvera and the bandits with him rise from the street. They run to Lara's front door. They start pounding the door down.

O'Reilly up on the roof tops has been covering Chris and others. As he jumps to another rooftop he is wounded. He hangs from one of the roofs and then falls to the ground.

112 INT. LARA'S - DAWN

Harry lies on the floor. Chris is kneeling next to him. Vin in b.g. by the door, reloading his gun. The pounding on the door continues.

HARRY

Chris?

CHRIS

Yes, Harry.

HARRY

Chris, I'd hate to die a sucker. We didn't come here just to keep an eye on a lot of corn and chile peppers, did we? There was really something else, all the time? Wasn't there?

CHRIS

Yes, Harry. You had it pegged right all the time.

(CONTINUED)

112 CONTINUED:

HARRY

I knew it. What was it?

CHRIS

Gold. Sacks of it.

HARRY

Oh, that sounds beautiful. How much?

CHRIS

Over half a million.

HARRY

My cut would have been what?

CHRIS

Seventy eight thousand.

HARRY

(happily)

I'll be damned.

(dies)

CHRIS

(after a moment)

Maybe you won't be.

The shooting outside and pounding increases. Bandits look in thru window - break glass - fire to inside. Chris rises and takes cover by Vin at the door.

113 EXT. PLAZA

Lee comes out from b.g. doorway of house. He runs to f.g. leans against wall of another house. He reacts to O.S. bandits pounding door of Lara's house. He reacts to O.S. Villagers being held prisoners in house. He kicks open the door of house and rushes inside.

114 INT. HOUSE

Three bandits hold Hilario, Miguel, Tomas and other Villagers prisoners. Lee rushes in. Kills the bandits. The Villagers rush out into the street. Lee follows.

115 EXT. LARA'S HOUSE

Calvera and the bandits are still pounding the door of house.

CALVERA

(to his men)

Cover, cover behind.

Calvera leaves his men and makes his way around to the back of Lara's house.

Hilario, Tomas, Miguel and other Villagers rush across the plaza and start clobbering the Calvera men at door of Lara's. Most of the bandits here are killed by the Villagers. One of the bandits runs away. Petra and Lupe, Rafaels widow, run after him. They both attack him and knock the bandit down.

Lee comes out of the house across the street. He reacts to the O.S. Villagers beating up the bandits. He gets shot. He slumps against the wall, and slowly falls to his knees, dead.

116 EXT. BACK PORCH OF LARA'S HOUSE

Calvera sneaks up on the back porch, gun in hand.

117 EXT. PLAZA

Some of Calvera's men are riding out on horseback.

Britt shoots three of them. Is about to throw his knife at another when he gets shot. He falls down dead as he throws his knife. The knife sinks into an adobe wall near him.

118 EXT. BACK PORCH OF LARA'S

Calvera spots Chris and Vin inside Lara's. He fires at them over the back glass doors.

Chris whirls around and shoots Calvera.

Calvera stumbles back and falls down into a corner of the back porch.

Two Villagers attack two of Calvera's men in the back yard of house next to Lara's. Two bandits are killed by O.S. Vin.

Chris crosses out into the porch towards the dying Calvera.

(CONTINUED)

118 CONTINUED:

CALVERA

(to Chris)

You came back. For a place
like this. Why? A man like you.
Why?

Calvera dies. Chris watches. He holsters his gun.

119 EXT. PLAZA

The remaining Calvera men try to escape by horseback.
Are pulled down by Chico and Villagers.

Chico rides out into the fields after fleeing bandits.

120 EXT. BACK YARD OF HOUSE

The wounded O'Reilly watches this and fires at O.S. bandits.
The three village boys, Rico, Jaime and Julio run in to him.

RICO

Bernardo, Bernardo.

O'REILLY

Get back, get back.

He pushes them away to cover at behind the church. He
crosses back to continue firing. He gets shot. He falls
to his knees. The boys rush over to him.

JAIME

We didn't mean to do it. We
didn't mean to do it.

O'REILLY

(looking at O.S.
Villagers)

You see.....you see your fathers.
(to the boys)
What's my name?

JAIME

Bernardo.

RICO

Bernardo.

O'REILLY

Damn right.
(his eyes go blank)

O'Reilly dies.

121 EXT. LARA'S HOUSE

Chris and Vin come out of Lara's. They find the Villagers standing over the bodies of Calvera's men. Chris crosses out into the plaza.

122 EXT. FIELDS

Chico pulls up his horse. He reacts to O.S. fleeing bandit, looks off towards the village.

123 EXT. PLAZA

Chris walks towards the village blacksmith shop. He stops as he sees the dead Britt. He pulls Britt's knife out of the adobe wall. He turns and looks back towards the village.

DISSOLVE:

124 EXT. CORNFIELD

The Villagers preparing the field for a new crop.

125 EXT. SOTERO'S - DAY

Chris, Vin and Chico and the Old Man. Chris stands by Old Man - Chico and Vin on horses. Hilario, Miguel and Tomas are there, plus one or two others in the background. Otherwise not a Villager is visible. Even these few are a little impatient, anxious to get to work in the fields.

OLD MAN

You could stay, you know. They wouldn't be sorry to have you stay.

CHRIS

They won't be sorry to have us go, either.

The Old Man nods. There is no denying it.

OLD MAN

The fighting is over. Your work is done. For them, each season has its tasks. If there were a season for gratitude, they would show it more.

(CONTINUED)

125

CONTINUED:

VIN

We didn't get any more than we expected, Old Man.

Again the Old Man nods, recognizing the wisdom of this.

OLD MAN

Only the farmers have won. They remain forever. They are like the land itself. You helped rid them of Calvera the way a strong wind helps rid them of locusts. You are like the wind, blowing over the land itself and passing on.

(and then)

Vaya con Dios.

CHRIS

Adios.

Chris, Vin and Chico ride slowly out of the village, down street to pass.

126

EXT. FRONT YARD OF HOUSE

Petra and other village women are sorting corn in yard. Petra looks to street as Chris, Vin and Chico ride thru. Chico and Petra exchange looks.

Chris, Vin and Chico reach the pass leading out of town. They stop. They turn back to look at the village.

Chico looks at Chris and Vin. Chris understands.

CHRIS

Adios.

CHICO

Adios.

Chico rides back down the street towards the yard where Petra is working. He dismounts and crosses into yard.

Petra looks up at him.

Chico looks down to her.

Petra resumes her work. Chico takes off his gun belt and prepares to help her.

(CONTINUED)

126 CONTINUED:

Chris and Vin are still at the pass.

CHRIS
(not bitterly, but
resignedly)
The Old Man was right. Only the
farmers have won. We lost, we
always lose.

Chris looks off and reacts to:

127 EXT. FIELDS AND BURIAL GROUND - DAY

Chris and Vin ride from b.g. fields. CAMERA PANS them as they ride past cemetery. They pause for a moment and look towards four freshly covered graves. They continue on.

The village boys, Rico, Jaime and Julio walk up to cemetery. They kneel at one of the graves and put fresh flowers on it. They look off towards O.S. Chris and Vin.

128 CHRIS AND VIN

They continue on without pausing or looking back. They follow the road, which leads into a clump of trees, and are lost from sight.

FADE OUT.

THE END